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# Marxist Philosophy

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## A POPULAR OUTLINE

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*CHAPTER I*

# PHILOSOPHY AS A SCIENCE

Marxist philosophy, as any other science, has a subject matter of its own which it studies. Before speaking about it, let us examine the problems which are solved not only by Marxist, but also by any other philosophy. The principal problem is the *fundamental question of philosophy*.

## 1. The Fundamental Question of Philosophy

Philosophy is one of the oldest sciences. Throughout history many philosophical schools have been created by the most diverse social classes and groups in different conditions and countries. How are we to find our way in this multitude of philosophical systems? How are we to ascertain their scientific value and determine the place of each one in the history of philosophical thought? To do so we must first of all see how a philosophical system or a philosopher tackles the fundamental question of philosophy.

If we look carefully at the world around us we shall notice that all objects or phenomena are either *material* or *ideal, spiritual*. The material phenomena include everything that *exists objectively*, i. e., *outside of man's consciousness* and *independently of it* (objects and processes on Earth, the countless bodies in the Universe, etc.). On the other hand, all that *exists in the consciousness* of man, all that comes within the sphere of his mental activity (thoughts and sensations, emotions, etc.), is related to the sphere of the ideal, the spiritual.

How are the material and the spiritual connected? Is the spiritual, ideal engendered by the material or vice versa? *It is the character of this connection, the relation of thought to being,* of the spiritual to the material that constitutes the fundamental question of philosophy.*

The question of the relation of thought to being is fundamental in philosophy because on the answer to it depends the solution to all the other problems of philosophy: the unity of the world, the character of the laws governing its development, the essence of knowledge and the ways of cognising the world, etc. Since there is nothing else in the world outside the material and the spiritual, it is impossible to create a philosophical system, draw a picture of the world as a whole, without solving the fundamental question of philosophy.

This question has two sides. The first is the solution of the problem *what is primary*, matter or consciousness—did matter give rise to consciousness or vice versa. The second side furnishes an answer to the question, *is the world knowable*—is man's reason capable of penetrating the secrets of nature, of disclosing the laws governing its development.

Pondering over the content of the fundamental question of philosophy, it is easy to see that only two, diametrically opposed approaches are possible: to recognise either matter or consciousness as primary. This is the reason why two basic trends, materialism and idealism, arose in philosophy long ago.

Philosophers who hold that *matter is primary* and consciousness is secondary, is a derivative of matter, are *materialists.* In their view, matter is eternal, it has never been created by anyone, there are no supernatural forces, no forces in a realm beyond the world. As for consciousness, it is a product of the historical development of matter, a property of an unusually complex material body, the human brain.

Philosophers who regard the "*spirit*", *consciousness*, as *primary* are *idealists.* In their view, consciousness existed

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* Being is a philosophical concept denoting nature, the external world, reality.

prior to matter, and brought it into being; it is the primary foundation of everything existing. Idealists are divided on the question: *what kind of consciousness* "creates" the world. The so-called *subjective idealists* hold that the world is "created" by the consciousness of the individual man, the subject. The *objective idealists* assert that the world is "created" by some kind of an objective consciousness (existing outside of man). Although in different philosophical systems this objective consciousness figures either as the "absolute idea", the "universal will", or a similar notion, it is not difficult to discern a god in it.

The opinion of philosophers on the solution of the second side of the fundamental question of philosophy is likewise divided.

*The world is knowable*—the materialists assert. Man's knowledge of the world is trustworthy, his reason is capable of penetrating the internal nature of things, of cognising their essence.

Idealists who *deny the knowability of the world* are called *agnostics.** Other idealists, although they think that the world is knowable, in reality distort the essence of knowledge. They claim that man cognises not the objective world, nature, but his own thoughts, emotions (subjective idealists) or a mystic "idea", a "universal spirit" (objective idealists).

### *Whom Do Materialism and Idealism Serve*

Contemporary materialism is a progressive, scientific world outlook. Materialism gives a correct picture of the world, presenting it as it really is; it is a true ally of science and man's practical activity, on the basis of which materialism itself has arisen and is developing. Materialism is an implacable foe of religion: in a world where there is nothing else except matter in motion there is no room for a god. Nor is it accidental that the church has always persecuted materialism and its supporters.

Materialism, as a rule, has been and remains the world outlook of the advanced classes of society interested in

* From the Greek *a*—no, and *gignoskein*—to know.

the progress of mankind, its economic and cultural development. In slave society materialism was utilised by the democratic strata in the struggle against the reactionary upper crust of the slave-owners, the aristocracy. In the period of the emergence of capitalism it served as the ideological weapon of the bourgeoisie in its battles against the feudal lords and the church. In our days materialism is a mighty weapon of the progressive part of mankind in its struggle against imperialist reactionary forces.

Idealism runs counter to science and is bound up with religion. Like religion, it gives a distorted picture of the world, declaring it to be unreal, illusory. Lenin described idealism as a road to clericalism, as disguised, refined clericalism. And this is understandable: the religious myth about the divine creation of the world is cloaked by idealism in subtle philosophical verbiage. What makes idealism particularly dangerous is its effort to pose as a science and draw on man's reason, not limiting itself to blind faith, as religion does.

Idealism, as a rule, serves the reactionary forces of society in their struggle against the progressive social forces. This too makes it akin to religion. Idealism and religion have always been tools for the spiritual enslavement of the working people by the exploiters, a means of justifying and reinforcing their rule. Today, too, the capitalist system finds loyal defenders and supporters in idealism and religion.

Denying the objective existence of the world and considering it a product of consciousness or divine will, idealism and religion attribute all the social contradictions and vices of capitalism to the delusions of people, to their moral failings, thus diverting the working people from efforts to establish a better life on earth, a life worthy of man.

Idealism and religion are very close in character, but we must not fully identify the two. Among idealist philosophers there were people who made a certain contribution to the development of philosophical thought (this will be discussed in the next chapter). But on the whole they too gave a distorted picture of the world and ultimately arrived at religion.

The achievements of science and practical experience

demonstrated the fallaciousness of idealism long ago. Nevertheless, idealist views are propagated to this day, chiefly because this is in the class interests of the exploiters.

Ruling classes need idealism as a means of combating materialism, as a tool for the spiritual enslavement of the working people. That is why they give every support to idealism and popularise it.

Because socialist society has no exploiters there are no people interested in idealism, and it is not propagated there. Under socialism a scientific, materialist world outlook prevails.

And so, we have established that philosophers, depending on how they answer the fundamental question of philosophy, are divided into materialists and idealists. Drawing a picture of the world, each one of them necessarily uses a definite *method* of knowledge. What is a method?

## 2. Concept of Method. Dialectics and Metaphysics

In the process of acquiring knowledge and in their practical activities people set themselves definite goals, put forward certain tasks. But to set a goal, to formulate a task does not yet mean to accomplish it. It is very important to find the right road to the goal, efficient methods for accomplishing the task. The road to attaining a goal, the sum of definite principles and ways of theoretical study and practical activity make up the *method*.

Without employing a definite method it is impossible to solve any scientific or practical problem. If we, for example, want to establish the chemical composition of a certain substance we must first of all master the method of chemical analysis, i. e., learn how to test this substance with the necessary chemical reagents, decompose it, ascertain the chemical properties of its constituents, etc. If we have to smelt a metal, we must learn the technology of smelting, i. e., the practical methods which have been elaborated by people in the process of metallurgical production.

A definite method is similarly necessary in studying physiological, biological and other phenomena. That is

why people give so much time and effort to devising methods of theoretical and practical work and to mastering these methods.

A method is not a mechanical sum of different ways of study chosen by people at random, without any connection with the phenomena being studied. The method itself is largely determined by the nature of these phenomena and their intrinsic laws. Therefore each sphere of science or practical activity devises its own methods. The methods of physics, for example, differ from the methods of chemistry, the latter differ from the methods of biology, and so on.

Scientific philosophy, generalising the achievements of the different sciences and the practical activity of mankind, has worked out its own method of knowledge—*materialist dialectics.* This method differs from the method of the particular sciences in that it furnishes a key to understanding not only separate spheres of reality, but all fields of nature, society and thought, without any exception, a key to understanding the world as a whole.

The word "dialectics" is of Greek origin. In antiquity dialectics was the name given to the art of conducting a dispute, of bringing out the truth by disclosing and resolving contradictions in the arguments of opponents. Subsequently this term was applied to a method of cognising reality. Dialectics examines the world in constant motion and development, i. e., sees it as it really is. As such it is the only scientific method. Drawing on the achievements of science and the practical experience of human society, dialectics maintains that the world is an endless process of movement, regeneration, the passing away of the old and the coming into being of the new. "For it (dialectical philosophy) nothing is absolute...," Engels wrote. "It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher."* Moreover, dialectics sees the source of motion and development in the internal contradictions inherent in objects and phenomena themselves.

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* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, p. 363.

Explaining the process of development, the struggle of the new against the old, the inevitable victory of the new, dialectics serves the progressive social forces in their struggle against the obsolete social order, against reactionary class forces. In our days dialectics in the hands of the working class and its Marxist party is an instrument for the cognition and revolutionary transformation of the world.*

*Metaphysics* is the method which is the antithesis of dialectical materialism.**

The metaphysical method of thought originated in natural science, but in the 17th-18th centuries it spread to philosophy as well. The metaphysics of those days denied development, the rise of the new, and understood motion as the simple displacement of bodies in space.

For metaphysics, Engels pointed out, things and concepts reflecting them represent separate, immutable given objects which must be studied one after another, one independent of the other.*** The well-known Swedish natural scientist Charles Linnaeus (1707-1778), for example, held that the number of species of plants had remained constant since the day of their "creation", that the species are unalterable. Hence, Linnaeus concluded, the task of natural science is merely to describe the order in nature which has been established by the "creator".

Metaphysicians reduced motion to the simplest mechanical displacement and this led them to deny qualitative transformations in nature, to understand development as an increase or decrease in that which already exists. The French philosopher Robinet (1735-1820), for example, held that an adult man in no way differs from his embryo, which is supposed to contain, in infinitesimally small size, all the organs and parts of the mature organism. He understood

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* The basic principles of materialist dialectics are outlined in Chapters VI-VIII.

** Metaphysics (from the Greek *meta ta physika*, after physics) was the name of the chapter in the philosophical work of Aristotle which was devoted to an abstract analysis of phenomena and followed the chapter devoted to physics. Subsequently the name metaphysics was given to the method of knowledge directly opposed to dialectics.

*** See Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1959, p. 34.

development of man as the simple unfoldment, growth of these embryonic parts and organs. Denial of qualitative changes, understanding of development merely as a quantitative increase or decrease, as a simple repetition of the existing without the birth of the new, refusal to recognise internal contradictions as the source of development—these too are characteristic of present-day metaphysicians.

Contemporary metaphysics which does not recognise the progressive nature of development, the struggle of the new against the old and the inevitable victory of the new, serves the interests of the reactionary forces and is employed by them in the struggle against everything progressive. Metaphysics is utilised, for example, by the revisionists who renounce the class struggle, the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, preach harmony between the exploited and exploiters, and advocate the idea of the peaceful "growing" of capitalism into socialism.

The truth of dialectics is proved by life, by science and practical experience. Its vitality is conclusively demonstrated by the contemporary development of society. The complete and final victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and its launching of the full-scale building of communism, the rise of the world socialist system, the growth of the forces of democracy, peace and socialism—all this convincingly proves the triumph of the principles of Marxist dialectics.

Having gained a general idea of materialism and dialectics, we can now go on to define the subject matter of Marxist philosophy, of dialectical and historical materialism, as it is called.

### 3. The Subject Matter of Marxist Philosophy

To define the subject matter of Marxist philosophy means to establish the range of questions it studies and to ascertain how it differs from other sciences.

Throughout the many centuries of the development of philosophy its subject matter has changed constantly. At first it embraced all the knowledge accumulated at the time: knowledge of the world as a whole, of its separate objects

and phenomena—the Earth, man, animals, minerals, etc. Then as production developed and scientific knowledge accumulated, the particular sciences were singled out one after another—mechanics, physics, chemistry, geology, history, and so on. At present there are dozens of sciences which study the most diverse spheres of reality.

What does Marxist philosophy study?

The main thing in the subject matter of Marxist philosophy is the solution of the fundamental philosophical question, the relation of consciousness to being. As we already know, all philosophical systems must answer this question, but the only completely scientific, correct, and consistent answer is furnished by Marxist philosophy.

The philosophy of Marxism is *dialectical materialism*. It is *materialist* because in solving the fundamental question of philosophy it proceeds from the premise that matter, being is primary and consciousness is secondary. It recognises the materiality and knowability of the world, and examines the world as it really is. Marxist philosophy is *dialectical*, because it examines the material world in constant motion, development and regeneration.

Proceeding from the correct solution of the fundamental question of philosophy, dialectical materialism reveals the *most general laws* governing the development of the material world. These laws also form the subject matter of Marxist philosophy.

The particular sciences also study the laws governing the development of the material world, but each is concerned with a definite sphere of reality: physics with heat, electricity, magnetism and other physical phenomena; chemistry with the processes of chemical transformation of substances; biology with the processes transpiring in plants and animals, etc. The laws of these sciences characterise development only in the *given* sphere of reality and cannot explain other spheres. Let us take, for example, the laws of mechanics. They disclose only the essence of mechanical motion, i.e., simple displacement of bodies in space, but they cannot explain chemical, biological or other processes. Although the laws of mechanics operate in all the enumerated processes, they have no independent importance there and are subordinated to other laws characterising the

essence of the particular processes (in chemical processes, the laws of chemistry, in biological processes, the laws of biology, and so on).

In contrast to the particular sciences, dialectical materialism studies the *general laws* which operate in all spheres of reality. Thus, all objects of inorganic and organic nature, the phenomena of social life and consciousness develop on the basis of the law of the unity and struggle of opposites, the law of passage of quantitative into qualitative changes, etc. These and other laws of materialist dialectics will be examined in detail in other chapters.

The laws governing the process of *knowledge*, which are a reflection of the laws of the objective world, also form the subject matter of dialectical materialism. Equipping man with knowledge of the laws of nature, society and thought, dialectical materialism indicates to people the ways not only for the cognition of the world, but also for *its revolutionary transformation.*

*Dialectical materialism is* thus *a science which, on the basis of the correct solution of the fundamental question of philosophy, reveals the most general, dialectical laws governing the development of the material world, the ways for its cognition and revolutionary transformation.*

Many philosophers prior to Marx sought to discover the most general laws of development, to give an integral and harmonious picture of the world, and many of them achieved a measure of success. But they proved incapable of drawing a genuinely scientific picture of the world. Some were hindered by their idealistic views, others, by the limitations of the metaphysical method. Moreover, and this is the main thing, all of them were far removed from the revolutionary struggle, from the interests of the working people.

The active participation of Marx and Engels in the revolutionary struggle of the working class, their selfless service to the people and thorough knowledge of the achievements of science and philosophy, enabled them to disclose these general laws, to discover the dialectical-materialist essence of reality.

Marx and Engels, it should be stressed, revealed the dialectical-materialist nature of development in social life as well. They created *historical materialism*, a scien-

tific theory of social development, a method for the cognition and revolutionary transformation of society. Historical materialism, as the *science of the most general laws governing the development of society*, is an integral component of Marxist philosophy.

### *Marxist Philosophy and Other Sciences*

The laws of dialectical materialism, as we already know, are of a general, universal character. They operate everywhere—in inorganic nature, living organisms, man and his thought. This universality of the laws of Marxist philosophy is of very great importance: these laws can be used to understand the most diverse phenomena of the world. Hence the tremendous significance of dialectical materialism for the development of the other sciences. Dialectical materialism, which stems from practical experience and the particular sciences and is a generalisation of their attainments, promotes their development and provides a scientific method of research. At the same time it does not relieve the research worker of the need to make a profound study of the particular sciences of nature, society and thought.

Some representatives of contemporary bourgeois philosophy (the so-called *positivists*) deny the importance of philosophy, of a scientific world outlook, for the development of science. They distort the essence of the interconnection between science and philosophy. Championing "positive" (applied) scientific knowledge, they divorce philosophy from science and claim that science in general needs no philosophy of any kind, that "science is its own philosophy".

The history of philosophy and science refutes the positivist views, and clearly shows that the two are inseparable. The Russian writer and philosopher Alexander Herzen compared philosophy to a mighty tree trunk and science with its numerous fields, to its branches. Just as there is no tree without a trunk and branches, science and philosophy are inconceivable one without the other. "Cut off the branches and what remains is a dead log," Herzen

wrote. "Remove the trunk and the branches will wither away."*

As natural science develops, its ties and interaction with philosophy grow increasingly closer. These links have become especially intimate now when scientists are solving such intricate problems of natural science as the character of the elementary particles of matter, the origin of life, the development of cosmic bodies and many others. In our age of the greatest scientific achievements, profound philosophical generalisations are absolutely indispensable; the tremendous progress of natural science and the deep revolutionary changes it undergoes require the closest union of philosophy and science. In these conditions the natural scientist must be a dialectical materialist.

Hence it is not accidental that more and more natural scientists are becoming conscious adherents of Marxist philosophy. It helps them correctly to orient themselves in the objective world, constantly to see its material character and to take into account the dialectics of nature in their particular field of research.

### 4. Theoretical Weapon of the Working Class

Dialectical materialism has arisen and developed as the theoretical, ideological weapon of the working class in its struggle against capitalism, for socialism and communism. The philosophy of Marxism is *revolutionary* in its very essence. It does not recognise the immutability of social systems and the eternity of private property, it proves the inevitable doom of capitalism and the victory of the new, socialist system and indicates ways and means of building socialism and communism.

Mastery of Marxist philosophy is especially important in our epoch of radical social upheaval, the epoch of transition from capitalism to communism. It helps the Marxist party to orient itself in the very intricate conditions of our time, to make a scientific analysis of the existing

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* A. Herzen, *Selected Philosophical Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1956, p. 106.

situation, and, in conformity with it, to single out the most important tasks and find the most efficient ways for accomplishing them.

Marxist philosophy is a powerful instrument for understanding and transforming the world, but *it must be applied creatively and account must be taken of the concrete historical conditions in which its laws and principles operate.* To master Marxist philosophy means not merely to learn by rote its propositions and conclusions, but to understand its essence, to learn how to apply it in practice.

The activities of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union furnish a model of applying the revolutionary philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. The Party's sober analysis of the historical conditions and the correlation of the class forces, its ability to alter strategy and tactics depending on objective changes, organically to blend the principles of Marxism-Leninism with concrete revolutionary activities have brought about the epochal victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and ushered in a new period in its development, the period of the full-scale building of communism.

*CHAPTER II*

# THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN MATERIALISM AND IDEALISM IN PRE-MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

Marxist philosophy stems from the main sources of world philosophical thought. It has inherited the finest achievements of preceding philosophies, has critically assimilated them on the basis of revolutionary practice and the latest scientific discoveries and thereby raised philosophical thought to a qualitatively new stage. The history of philosophy shows how the scientific, dialectical-materialist world outlook arose and developed in the course of the struggle between materialism and idealism, between dialectics and metaphysics.

## 1. The Struggle Between Materialism and Idealism in Slave Society

Materialism and idealism as more or less complete philosophical systems, representing the first attempts to comprehend the world as a whole, arose many centuries before our era in the slave societies of the Ancient East (China, India, Egypt and Babylon) and reached their apex in ancient Greece and Rome.

The rise of materialism was determined by the development of production and the initial successes of science. And no sooner had materialism made its first steps than it entered into implacable struggle against its foe, idealism. The battle of materialism against idealism reflected the

struggle of the progressive elements of slave society against the reactionary forces.

The materialists of antiquity were convinced of the objective existence of the material world and they sought to find some primary element, primary matter from which supposedly all the diverse objects of the world arose. They often identified this primary matter with concrete manifestations of nature—water, air, fire, etc. Thus, the *Chervaks*, materialist philosophers in ancient India (4th-2nd centuries B.C.), maintained that everything existing in the world consists of four elements—fire, air, water and earth. All the living creatures, including man, were also formed from these elements. The Chervaks recognised no god and held that the world develops because of its own nature, its internal causes. Materialist tendencies were contained in the doctrines of the *Sankhya*, *Nyaya*, *Vaiseshika* and other ancient Indian philosophical schools and trends.

Ancient materialism reached its zenith in the atomistic theory of the ancient Greek philosopher Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.). Democritus voiced the farsighted supposition that the world consists of atoms and a void. In his view, atoms are invisible particles differing in shape and size, and, combining one with another, they form the entire diversity of objects but do not change themselves. Atoms are immutable, eternal, indivisible and impenetrable.

For his political convictions Democritus, who came from the middle democratic section of the slave-owners, was a democrat. He was in favour of developing the crafts, trade and science.

The objective idealist Plato (427-347 B.C.) was the ideological opponent of Democritus. Plato declared the entire visible (objective, material) world to be untrue and counterposed to it the world of ideas, which he regarded as the changeless world of "true being". This invented, imaginary world of ideas supposedly precedes the visible world which, according to Plato, is merely its shadow or hazy reflection. Plato openly fought the materialists and atheists, declaring them dangerous criminals and demanding the death penalty for them.

Plato belonged to the Greek aristocracy, the upper crust of slave society, and his socio-political views were extreme-

ly reactionary. He considered the slave aristocratic republic, administered by philosopher-rulers and warriors, the "ideal state". He treated the slaves with unconcealed contempt.

The struggle between the supporters of Democritus and the followers of Plato reflected the struggle of materialism and idealism in ancient Greek philosophy.

The ancient philosophers were spontaneous dialecticians. Dialectical ideas were particularly developed by the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus (c. 540-480 B. C.) who was the father of the very first form of dialectical thinking — naïve materialist dialectics. Everything flows, everything changes, Heraclitus asserted: it is impossible to bathe twice in the same river. He regarded fire, an unusually volatile and variable element, as the primary source of the world, the active, eternally living principle. The world, Heraclitus declared, "was created by none of the gods or man, but was, is and will be eternally living fire, regularly becoming ignited and regularly becoming extinguished".

This statement by Heraclitus was described by Lenin as a "very good exposition of the principles of dialectical materialism". It gives the first, although as yet very naïve, expression to the basic ideas of dialectical materialism: the material unity of the world, its objectivity, and independence of consciousness, unity of matter and motion and the law-governed motion of matter.

Ancient philosophers voiced farsighted suppositions about the existence of opposite sides in objects, about the struggle of opposites as the internal source of development of objects. "...Everything proceeds through struggle and out of necessity," Heraclitus said. He pointed out that the living and the dead, the awake and asleep, the young and old are contained in man. Objects, in his opinion, can be cold or hot, dry or wet, with one constantly being transformed into the other. "The cold becomes warm, the warm grows cold, the wet dries, the dry gets wet."

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) was the outstanding philosopher of ancient Greece. He raised serious objections to Plato's idealism and, asserting the objective existence of the material world, held that nature does not depend for its

objective existence on any ideas. Seeing that all objects of nature are in constant motion, Aristotle for the first time classified the kinds of motion, reducing them to three main ones—coming into being, destruction and change. He held that the world is knowable and pointed out that nature itself, material reality, is the source of knowledge. He divided all sciences into three groups: theoretical, practical and creative. He placed philosophy in the theoretical sciences and saw its aim as studying the prime causes and elements of everything existing. Aristotle is rightly regarded as the founder of *logic*, the science of the laws and forms of correct thinking.

While considering matter the prime source of everything existing, Aristotle regarded it as a passive, inert element and counterposed to it "form", a living, active element. Moreover, he also recognised the "form of all forms", the prime mover, the Final Cause of the world, in which it is not difficult to discern god. This was a manifestation of Aristotle's vacillations in the direction of idealism.

Marx and Engels had a high opinion of Aristotle. Marx, for example, called him the Alexander the Great of Greek philosophy, but at the same time criticised his inconsistency, his serious concessions to idealism.

Ancient philosophers continued to develop the ideas of materialism and dialectics after Aristotle. The outstanding materialists of that period were the Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) and the Roman philosopher Lucretius (99-55 B.C.) who developed further the atomistic theory of Democritus.

From this it follows that the philosophers of antiquity sowed the first seeds of a scientific world outlook: they were the fathers of the initial form of materialist philosophy, *spontaneous materialism*, which contained a naïvely dialectical approach to reality. Their philosophical views, as a rule, were merely farsighted surmises, the product of direct perception of the world. Their ideas were not sufficiently substantiated scientifically, for in those distant times science was merely making its first steps.

Having raised a number of important questions (the material essence of the world, motion in nature, etc.), the

ancient philosophers gave a mighty impulse to philosophical thought. More than one generation of philosophers engaged in tackling these problems.

## 2. Metaphysical Materialism of the 17th-18th Centuries

The deep crisis of the slave system ultimately ended in its downfall and replacement by feudal society based on the labour of serfs. The church held a dominating position in this epoch and exerted tremendous influence on the state, science and education. Philosophy was turned into a hand-maiden of theology, the materialism of the ancients was forgotten and a religious idealistic world outlook reigned supreme for centuries.

Nevertheless in this epoch, too, despite the omnipotence of the church, philosophy and natural science slowly developed, especially in China, India, the Arab countries and Central Asia.

In the 15th-16th centuries a new, capitalist mode of production arose in a number of West European countries and, together with it, a new class, the bourgeoisie, came into being. As the bourgeoisie grew and consolidated its position in society, materialism increasingly gained ground, the bourgeoisie skilfully using it as an ideological weapon in the struggle against feudalism and the church.

The Polish scientist Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) struck a powerful blow at idealism and religion. In contrast to the religious geocentric Ptolemaic system which asserted that the god-created Earth is the centre of the Universe and that the Sun revolves around the Earth, Copernicus put forward the so-called heliocentric system, according to which the Sun is the centre of the Universe, while the Earth is merely a planet of the solar system. Subsequently the works of the Italian scientists—Giordano Bruno, Galileo and others—introduced an essential correction to Copernicus' doctrine: the Sun is the centre only of the solar system which, in its turn, moves in space.

A wave of bourgeois revolutions swept across Western Europe in the 16th-18th centuries with the result that capitalism struck root in the Netherlands at the end of the

16th century, in Britain in the middle of the 17th century and in France after the bourgeois revolution at the end of the 18th century. The rise of capitalism was accompanied by the vigorous development of the productive forces, which determined the need for greater scientific knowledge.

To organise industrial production it was necessary to learn the properties of raw and other materials; for more successful farming, knowledge of plants and animals was required; the development of trade and shipping demanded the unerring determination of a ship's bearings, etc. This is how the needs of capitalist production made for the accumulation of scientific knowledge, which led to the development of such particular sciences as mechanics, astronomy, physics and chemistry.

At that time the greatest progress was made in mechanics, which was caused above all by the technical requirements of production: the need to design machines and equipment, to regulate mountain streams, etc. Moreover, mechanical motion as such is the simplest and most accessible to investigation. That is why it was studied by natural scientists before all other kinds of motion.

Natural science in those days saw its main task in studying experimentally separate things and phenomena. An *analytical method* was widely used for these purposes. Scientists mentally divided nature into separate parts, classified each one, studied its properties and the laws of its movement.

The analytical method played a great part in the development of natural science, but one-sided concentration on it had its adverse effects as well. In making experiments on separate things, classifying them, dividing the complex into simpler parts, the natural scientists inevitably tore them out of the general context and ignored their internal processes. The very development of natural science thus led to the entrenchment of the *metaphysical method of understanding the world.* From natural science this method spread to philosophy as well.

The metaphysical method was limited, one-sided, but its dominance in the 17th-18th centuries was conditioned by history. As Engels pointed out, it was necessary to study things before the study of processes could be undertaken;

one had to know first what the *given* object is in order to be able to study the changes taking place within it.

The metaphysical approach to nature, the priority development of mechanics among all the sciences accounted for the special, *metaphysical and mechanistic* character of materialism in the 17th-18th centuries.

The first representative of the materialism of the new age was the English philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626). He vehemently opposed idealism and religion and held that the task of philosophy, of science in general, is to cognise nature and help man master its mighty forces. Recognising the materiality of the world, Bacon thought that matter in its qualitative diversity is boundless. Bacon makes matter shine with all the colours of the rainbow and, as Marx put it, smile to man with its poetical sensuous brightness.

Bacon philosophically explained the method of studying nature widely used by scientists in his time. To know, Bacon pointed out, one has to experiment, to observe, to analyse the facts and then proceed from single facts and things to generalisations, conclusions. The movement of thought from particular facts to generalisation is called *induction*. Bacon is the father of experimental science, of the inductive method of knowledge, and this is his contribution to the development of philosophical thought. But Bacon absolutised induction and ignored its antithetical method, *deduction*, which, on the basis of general postulates, draws conclusions about particular facts.

Bacon's materialist traditions in English philosophy were continued by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704). Hobbes elaborated a whole system of metaphysical materialism. He likened all bodies in nature, not excluding living organisms, to machines: the heart, he wrote, is a spring, the nerves are strings and the joints are wheels, giving motion to the whole body. Even the state was pictured in Hobbes' philosophy as a monstrous machine. Hobbes excluded god from his system, declaring that the question of god was not a subject of science, but of faith.

Locke contributed to philosophy the groundwork for *sensualism* (from the Latin *sensus*—sense), a trend in the

theory of knowledge, according to which all knowledge of man stems from sensory data, from sensations.

The bourgeois revolution triumphed in Britain in the second half of the 17th century, but the victorious bourgeoisie entered into agreement with the feudal aristocracy, whose positions in British society were still strong. Hence it was no accident that in the first half of the 18th century materialism in Britain gave way to the subjective idealist philosophy of George Berkeley (1684-1753) and David Hume (1711-1776).

Berkeley was an enemy of materialism. He declared the surrounding world a product of man's consciousness and regarded all things as a combination of sensations. Objects, things exist only because man perceives, senses them—sees, hears, feels; to exist means to be perceived (*esse est percipi*)—this is the basic thesis of his philosophy.

Berkeley especially hated the concept of matter. He declared that "all the impious schemes of atheism and irreligion" were raised upon the foundation of the doctrine of matter, that "material substance" has been a "great friend" to "atheists in all ages". He called for banning the concept of matter and persecuting the supporters of materialism. To refute materialism and provide justification for a religious world outlook—such was the aim of Bishop Berkeley, the philosopher.

Berkeley's idealist views were shared by Hume who likewise did not recognise the objective world and held that man's sensations are the sole reality.

The philosopher and mathematician René Descartes (1596-1650) was the first representative of the philosophy of the new age in France. In Descartes' philosophy we should differentiate between his doctrine of nature (physics) and doctrine of the supernatural (metaphysics). In physics he proved the materiality of nature, its infinity and eternity. According to his views, nature is in motion, but this motion proceeds according to the laws of mechanics. Descartes also extended his mechanistic approach to physiology.

Descartes was a *dualist* in his approach to the fundamental question of philosophy, since he held that the world is founded on two principles independent of each other—matter and consciousness.

He was the father of *rationalism*, a trend in the theory of knowledge which considers reason the sole source of knowledge. Rationalism divorces reason from perceptual knowledge of the sensations and this is its weak point. But in the 17th century it was progressive: it proclaimed the triumph of reason over faith, expressed confidence in the boundless cognitive powers of man, and consequently was very valuable at the time when religion and idealism held sway. The rationalism of Descartes was an important achievement of philosophy at that time.

In Holland where capitalism struck root earlier than in other European countries, the materialist philosophy of Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677) arose in the 17th century. Spinoza formulated the doctrine of the material unity of the world. Overcoming the dualism of Descartes, he asserted that a single substance constitutes the basis of all objects in the world. This substance—in pre-Marxist philosophy the immutable basis of everything existing—is nature, eternal in time and infinite in space. Consciousness does not exist outside this substance and like extension (corporeality) is its attribute. Nature, Spinoza asserted, develops according to its own laws; it is its own cause and requires no supernatural forces.

Spinoza was an outstanding atheist of the 17th century. He did not simply criticise religion, but sought scientifically to prove its fallaciousness and expose its roots and reactionary role. His thesis that nature is its own cause drove the concept of god from nature and, in effect, was a philosophical substantiation of atheism.

### *French Materialism of the 18th Century*

The revolution triumphed in France at the end of the 18th century. The most radical of all the European bourgeois revolutions, it destroyed feudalism and established the undivided rule of capitalism in the country. The revolution had been preceded by an ideological struggle of the revolutionary bourgeoisie against feudalism and its religious-idealistic world outlook. French 18th-century materialism arose in bitter political and ideological struggle. Its chief

exponents were Julien Lamettrie (1709-1751), Denis Diderot (1713-1784), Claude Adrien Helvétius (1715-1771) and Paul Henri Holbach (1723-1789).

The French materialists were irreconcilable enemies of feudal reaction, religion and idealism. In contrast to obsolete feudal society, they held up the kingdom of "eternal and natural reason", bourgeois society, regarded by them as the ideal social system.

The big contribution of the French materialists to the history of philosophy was their system of nature, based on the principle of the unity of matter and motion. "The Universe," Holbach wrote, "this colossal combination of everything existing, presents to us only matter and motion everywhere." Matter, from the viewpoint of the French materialists, is everything that acts on man's sense-organs, while motion is the self-movement of matter, caused by matter itself, and not by god. The motion of matter proceeds according to natural laws, which man can neither abolish nor alter. These laws were understood by the French materialists metaphysically, as simple and immutable.

The French materialists also raised the theory of knowledge to a higher level. They considered knowledge a reflection in man's mind of objectively existing objects and phenomena. Objects, acting on man's sense-organs, produce sensations which give rise to knowledge.

The French materialists also attacked the church dogmas about the creation of the world, the immortality of the soul, etc. They considered religion a tool for the spiritual enslavement of the people, a bulwark of tyranny and ignorance. They saw the sources of religion in the ignorance of the people, their fear of the unknown forces of nature, and looked upon education and science as means of overcoming this fear. Lenin had a high opinion of the critique of religion by the French materialists.

The views of the French materialists also contained elements of dialectics. Diderot, for example, voiced the idea about the development of organisms, the connection of plants and animals with the conditions of their existence. But on the whole their views did not go beyond the bounds of mechanistic, metaphysical materialism.

### *Materialism in Russia in the 18th Century*

A scientific world outlook developed in Russia in the 18th century. Mikhail Lomonosov (1711-1765) and Alexander Radishchev (1749-1802) were the representatives of Russian materialist philosophy of that period.

Lomonosov was an encyclopaedic scientist who based his philosophical views on remarkable discoveries in physics, chemistry, geology and other sciences. He corroborated the idea of the material unity of the world by the law of conservation of matter, discovered by him, and illustrated the motion of matter by the data he obtained on changes in the geological structure of the earth's crust. Lomonosov was opposed to agnosticism and championed knowledge gained through experience. He opposed serfdom in Russia, held that science must serve the people and firmly believed in their bright future.

And so, the development of philosophy in the 17th-18th centuries produced a new form of materialism—*metaphysical materialism.* Being the world outlook of the bourgeoisie, a progressive class at that time, it dealt a great blow at the reactionary ideology of feudalism—idealism and religion. It drew on the achievements of natural science which provided it with a scientific foundation. Metaphysical materialism of the 17th-18th centuries represented a considerable step forward in the development of a scientific world outlook.

Marx and Engels, while noting the positive significance of this materialism, disclosed its serious inconsistency and limitations which were, firstly, its *mechanistic character*, i. e., the tendency to explain chemical, organic and other processes in nature by the laws of mechanics; secondly, its *metaphysical character*, i.e., denial of development in nature; thirdly, its *idealistic explanation of the phenomena of social life.* The materialists of the 17th-18th centuries did not see the material causes for the development of society and looked upon history as the gradual realisation of ideas.

## 3. The Struggle Between Materialism and Idealism in German Philosophy of the 18th-19th Centuries

Feudal relations predominated in Germany in the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries. The fact that Germany was broken up into many states determined its economic and political backwardness. Nevertheless here too capitalism was maturing and the bourgeoisie was growing slowly but steadily. In contrast to the radical French bourgeoisie, the German bourgeoisie was cowardly and half-hearted. Because of its economic and political weakness, it was incapable of winning political power and was satisfied with half-way reforms, trying only somewhat to renovate, to improve the existing order of things in its own interests. Aware of its weakness and afraid of revolution, it was compelled to seek a compromise with feudalism and the monarchy.

The contradictory, dual nature of the German bourgeoisie was reflected in German philosophy of the 18th-19th centuries. This contradictoriness especially stands out in the works of the foremost German philosophers of that period—Kant, Hegel and Feuerbach.

### *The Philosophy of Kant*

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was the outstanding German philosopher of the 18th century. In his youth he made a profound study of natural science. The well-known Kant-Laplace cosmogonic hypothesis, according to which the Earth and other planets of the solar system arose in a natural way from a nebula, refuted the religious myth about the divine creation of the world. True, in his hypothesis Kant made a serious concession to religion in that he admitted the existence of god. But, having set the natural forces in motion, god's mission came to an end.

Subsequently Kant worked out his own philosophical system marked by contradictoriness and duality. It combined diverse, antithetical philosophical trends and attempted to reconcile materialism and idealism, to reach a compromise between them. On the one hand, Kant spoke as a materialist: outside of us, he said, there exist things which,

acting on our sense-organs, produce sensations. On the other hand, Kant maintained that these things (he called them "things-in-themselves") are unknowable, are inaccessible to human reason. In this he was an idealist, an agnostic. The mind, according to Kant, does not cognise, but constructs the object of cognition.

Kant created his own system of logical categories—the most general concepts of thought, such as cause and effect, necessity and chance, possibility and reality. He held, however, that these concepts are not a reflection of reality, but are merely categories of our reason. Through these concepts, Kant assumed, man lends nature definite order and regularity. Lenin, criticising this aspect of Kant's philosophy, said that the Kantian formula: "Man gives laws to nature and not nature to man", is a formula of fideism, of clericalism.

The strong point of Kant's philosophy was its dialectical ideas. He expounded valuable thoughts about contradictions, although, to him, contradictions were inherent not in the material world, but only in human reason. Moreover, these contradictions are insoluble. Reason, for example, cannot solve the problem whether the world is finite or infinite. These insoluble contradictions of reason, as Kant assumes, are evidence of man's inability to know the objective world. In this respect Kant was unable to understand the objective dialectics of reality itself. From his viewpoint, reason is also incapable of deciding whether god exists, and whether the soul is immortal—questions which supposedly come within the competence of faith. Kant thus arrived at the restriction of science and the preservation of religion, of faith and he does not conceal this: "I must therefore restrict knowledge to make room for belief."

Notwithstanding its contradictory and limited nature, Kant's philosophy was an important advance in philosophical thought. Kant's cosmogonic theory, his effort to explore the cognitive powers of human reason, his system of logical categories and particularly his dialectical ideas, exerted a positive influence on the subsequent development of philosophy. At the same time Kant's idealism and agnosticism are to this day utilised by reactionary philosophers to combat a scientific world outlook.

## *Hegel's Idealistic Dialectics*

Georg Hegel (1770-1831) stood out among German classical philosophers of the 19th century. He criticised Kant for his subjective idealism and agnosticism, but this critique was levelled from a position of objective idealism. The world, Hegel asserted, is the result of creation by some kind of objective consciousness existing outside of man—the "absolute idea", the "universal spirit". "*Everything* actual, in so far as it is true, is the Idea," Hegel wrote, "and has its truth by and in virtue of the Idea alone."

Hegel asserts that the idea at first develops within itself. Then at a certain stage of its development, it is "embodied" in nature, bringing to life all the multiplicity of objects and phenomena. At a still later stage the idea gives rise to human society, whose history is a process of self-knowledge of this absolute idea. The process of knowledge of the absolute idea, Hegel assumed, was consummated in his philosophical system, which he regarded as the acme of philosophical development.

Hegel formulated the fundamental laws of dialectics, governing the development of ideas, thoughts. He demonstrated that development proceeds not in a closed circle, but progressively, from the lower forms to the higher, that in the process quantitative changes pass into qualitative changes, that internal contradictions are the source of development. Hegel also defined the basic concepts (categories) of dialectics and showed that they are interconnected and mutually convertible.

Hegel's dialectics, besides being a great step forward in philosophical thought, also had serious shortcomings, the most important of which stemmed from its idealist character. According to Hegel, dialectical laws serve as the basis for development not of objects and phenomena of the material world, but only of the idea which assumed their shape.

The process of development too was understood by Hegel in a limited sense. Nature, according to Hegel, does not develop in time, but only extends in space. He saw the development of society only in the past and regarded the Prussian monarchy of his day as the summit of social

progress. Hegel also held that in society contradictions are resolved not in struggle, but are reconciled. To him the existing Prussian state was a picture of full harmony of class interests. He thus drew extremely reactionary conclusions from his philosophy; he justified war, advocated chauvinistic ideas which were subsequently used by reactionary ideologists of imperialism.

Marx and Engels revealed the deep contradiction between Hegel's idealist system, i. e., his doctrine that nature and society are forms of existence of the "absolute idea", and his dialectical method. They condemned Hegel for his idealist philosophy, his reactionary political views, but highly valued Hegelian dialectics. Dialectics was the "rational kernel" which Marx and Engels took from Hegel's philosophy and, stripping it of all its idealist trappings, used in creating dialectical and historical materialism.

### *Feuerbach's Materialism*

Ludwig Feuerbach (1814-1872) was the last outstanding representative of German classical philosophy who indefatigably fought against idealism which dominated German philosophy at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries. Feuerbach restored materialism to its rightful place and this constituted his great service to philosophy.

Rejecting idealism and religion, Feuerbach held that philosophy must not confine itself to the bounds of pure thought, that its mission was to study nature and man. Nature exists outside of man, it is "...the first, primary uncreatable being". Man, however, is part of nature, a product of its prolonged development and therefore consciousness, in Feuerbach's opinion, does not precede nature, but only reflects it. Matter, nature, is knowable, is accessible to man and is perceived by all his sense-organs.

Feuerbach's philosophy is not as mechanistic as the materialism of the 17th-18th centuries. He saw in nature not only mechanical, but also many other processes. Attempting, for example, to explain the origin of life, he held that chemical transformations play the decisive part in this process.

Feuerbach also raised to a higher level the materialist theory of knowledge, in which he consistently continued the traditions of sensualism. He thought that man receives his first perceptions of nature through the sense-organs. These sense-perceptions are generalised by reason which forms concepts, gives names to objects.

Feuerbach was an atheist. Not confining himself to the opinion of the French materialists that religion is the product of ignorance and fear, he sought the roots of religion in human life itself and saw them in the intrinsic power of man's imagination. But he did not succeed in laying bare the class roots of religion. Rejecting religion, Feuerbach demanded that knowledge be put in place of religion, and reason, in place of the Bible.

Although Feuerbach sought to understand nature in its movement, development, his philosophy as a whole did not go beyond the bounds of metaphysical materialism. He cast aside Hegel's idealistic dialectics and did not recognise contradictions in the objective world, thinking that they are possible only in thought. As other philosophers before Marx, Feuerbach understood the development of society idealistically. He considered morals, the ethical relations among people, the main driving force of history, not realising that they themselves are engendered by economic, production relations.

Feuerbach's philosophy was of great importance for the development of a genuinely scientific world outlook. The materialist ideas it contained were the "main kernel" Marx and Engels used in creating dialectical and historical materialism.

Thus, German classical philosophy of the 18th-19th centuries was another big step forward in the creation of a scientific world outlook. Materialism was further developed in the works of Feuerbach, while Hegel elaborated a harmonious system of *idealistic dialectics* as a sum-total of logical categories. Hegel's great service to philosophy is that behind the dialectics of ideas he *divined* the dialectics of things, i. e., the character of development of objects and phenomena in the material world.

German classical philosophy, as represented by Hegel and Feuerbach, was the direct theoretical source from which Marxist philosophy was formed.

### 4. The Contribution of Russian 19th-Century Materialist Philosophy

An intensive process of disintegration of the feudal economy and the maturing of the new, capitalist system within it was under way in Russia in the second half of the 19th century. It was marked by bitter class struggle of the peasantry against the landlords. The interests of the millions of oppressed peasants and all the working people who fought for their freedom were expressed by the revolutionary democrats Vissarion Belinsky (1811-1848), Alexander Herzen (1812-1870), Nikolai Chernyshevsky (1828-1889), Nikolai Dobrolyubov (1836-1861) and others.

Elaborating a materialist philosophy, the revolutionary democrats endeavoured to apply it in the struggle against the reactionary religious idealist world outlook and to provide the theoretical groundwork for the revolutionary liberation movement of the Russian people. They were sworn enemies of the autocracy and serfdom, firmly believed in the creative powers of the people and wanted to remake society in a revolutionary way.

Keeping in close touch with life, with the revolutionary struggle of the people, and knowing the achievements of natural science of their day, Russian materialist philosophers were able to overcome the limitations of pre-Marxist Western philosophy in a number of important questions and make a notable step forward in developing scientific philosophical thought. They interpreted Hegel's dialectics in a materialist way and made use of it for justifying the liberation struggle of the working people. Herzen, for example, saw in it the "algebra of the revolution". Chernyshevsky and Herzen voiced a number of farsighted surmises concerning the important role of material factors in social development. All this gave the founders of Marxism-Leninism grounds for highly assessing the philosophy of the Russian revolutionary democrats. Lenin, summing up the philosophical views of Herzen, considered that he came up to the threshold of dialectical materialism and halted before historical materialism. The outstanding revolutionary democrats were the direct forerunners of Marxism in Russia.

The fathers of Russian materialist philosophy drew close

to a correct understanding of the class nature of philosophy. Every philosopher, Chernyshevsky wrote, has always been a representative of one of the political parties which fought for domination in society.

In his understanding of the subject matter of philosophy Chernyshevsky came near to the way it is treated by dialectical materialism. In his opinion, philosophy engaged in the solution of the most general problems of science and above all of the "relation of spirit to matter". Moreover, Chernyshevsky stressed that there were only two solutions to this question, materialist and idealist, with no possible compromise between them.

The Russian revolutionary democrats solved the fundamental question of philosophy in a consistently materialist way. They had no doubt that objects and phenomena of the outside world exist objectively, independent of man's consciousness, that they represent diverse combinations of matter. All objects of the world have something in common, something identical. "... This identical thing in material objects is called matter," Chernyshevsky wrote. Consciousness was considered by them as secondary, a derivative of matter. "Consciousness," Herzen pointed out, "is not something alien to nature, but the highest degree of its development...."

The Russian revolutionary democrats were ardent proponents of science and pointed to the boundless capacities of human reason. They were convinced that man can and should cognise truth. They understood knowledge as a reflection of surrounding reality in man's consciousness. "Man," Dobrolyubov wrote, "evolves concepts not out of himself, but receives them from the outside world." The correctness, truth of the knowledge obtained, Chernyshevsky pointed out, "is tested by the practical experience of life". Chernyshevsky also spoke about the concrete character of truth and its dependence on the concrete historical conditions.

The materialism of the Russian revolutionary democrats was permeated with dialectical ideas. The idea about the universal development of reality runs through all their works. Nature, Herzen wrote, is a "process ... stream, flow, motion...." Moreover, they understood motion not as a mere

repetition, but as a progressive development, the transition from the simple to the complex, from the lower to the higher. "To live means to develop, to move forward," Belinsky said. The revolutionary democrats saw the source of development in the struggle of opposites contained in objects and phenomena of the world. This struggle leads to dialectical negation, replacement of the old by the new. The new, Belinsky wrote, must emerge from the negation of the old. They sought to apply their theory of contradictions to an analysis of social life and employ it in the class struggle. In contrast to Hegel, who supported the reconciliation of class contradictions, they emphasised that contradictions are not reconciled but eliminated in bitter struggle.

Notwithstanding their notable achievements in the elaboration of materialism and dialectics, the Russian revolutionary democrats could not fuse the two into a single world outlook, could not apply them consistently to phenomena of social life and turn materialist dialectics into a science of the most general laws governing the development of nature, society and thought.

In their views on society they remained idealists being unable to disclose the decisive significance of material production in the life of society, although they attached great importance to it.

Criticising serfdom, the autocracy and the capitalist order, they arrived at socialist ideas, but their socialism was utopian. By failing to see that capitalism was progressive as compared to feudalism, they thought that Russia would arrive at socialism via the peasant commune. The moment this commune is freed of the fetters of the autocracy and serfdom and the land is turned over to the peasants, they asserted, the commune will supposedly become the cell of socialist society.

In reality, however, the peasant commune as such could not, and did not become the cell of socialism. The proletariat is the only consistently revolutionary class destined to make socialist changes. Since Russia entered the capitalist path of development later than the other European countries, the Russian proletariat in the second half of the 19th century was still numerically small and consequently was not a great revolutionary force.

Not being aware of the proletariat and not understanding its revolutionary role, the Russian thinkers lapsed into utopian ideas, although their Utopian Socialism differed substantially from that in Western Europe. It was combined with revolutionary democracy, the conviction that socialism can be achieved only through revolutionary struggle, through the armed uprising of the people. The future socialist society, Belinsky wrote, will be established "not by sugary and enthusiastic phrases" but by the "double-edged sword of word and deed".

The world outlook of the Russian revolutionary democrats was a further step in the development of materialism. This was materialism connected with the dialectical method of approach to reality, which was placed at the service of the oppressed peasantry fighting for liberation and was founded on the existing natural science. Although the dialectics of the Russian materialists did not constitute a harmonious, logical system, its value lay in its service to the social cause, the cause of the revolution. Russian materialist philosophy of the 19th century made a big contribution to the development of a scientific world outlook.

*CHAPTER III*

# THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of Marxism was created by the great leaders of the working class *Karl Marx* (1818-1883) and *Friedrich Engels* (1820-1895). Is this philosophy merely the fruit of the brilliant minds of its founders or a product of the epoch, a sign of the times? What causes brought it into being?

The rise of Marxist philosophy is a natural result of historical development. It was brought about by the socio-economic conditions and had definite prerequisites in natural science and philosophy.

## 1. The Conditions and Prerequisites for the Rise of Marxist Philosophy

### *Socio-Economic Conditions*

By mid-19th century capitalism had replaced feudalism in many countries. The advent of capitalism caused a great advance in production and the rapid development of technology, science and culture.

Capitalism also brought into being the class destined to destroy the capitalist system and to make socialist transformations. This class is the proletariat. Exploited by the bourgeoisie and deprived of elementary human rights, the working class is engaged in bitter struggle against its enslav-

ers. Under capitalism, the class contradictions become unusually sharp and are expressed in direct actions of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. French workers rose up in Lyons, Silesian weavers in Germany, and the Chartist movement spread in England. The workers demanded better conditions, higher wages, a shorter working day, etc. But their actions in those days were of an unorganised, spontaneous nature. The workers did not yet visualise clearly the ultimate aims for which they should fight, did not know real, effective ways and means of struggle against their class enemies. All this impeded the proletarian movement and prevented it from achieving success. An urgent need arose for a scientific theory which would enable the proletariat to comprehend the laws of social development, to understand the inevitable doom of capitalism, to become aware of its mission as the grave-digger of the bourgeoisie and the builder of the new, socialist system.

The very development of the proletarian movement thus confronted science with a task of great importance—to create a revolutionary theory, to forge an ideological weapon for the proletariat in its struggle against capitalism and for socialism. And science, as represented by Marx and Engels, satisfied this pressing demand of history—Marxism was created, of which Marxist philosophy is a component part and the theoretical foundation.

### *Prerequisites in Natural Science and Theoretical Sources*

The rise of Marxist philosophy was also prepared by the entire progress of natural science and philosophical thought. The development of natural science in the 19th century was unusually rapid. It ceased to be a science engaged in the accumulation of facts and the study of separate things; it turned into a theoretical science seeking to explain these facts and establish the connection between them. Metaphysics in natural science gave way to dialectical ideas of the unity and historical development of the world.

The first breach in the metaphysical view on nature was made by Kant, whose cosmogonic hypothesis proved that the Earth and the solar system were not eternal, but were

the result of the long development of matter. Later came the birth of geology, the science which traces the development of the Earth's crust; physics, chemistry, biology and other sciences developed very rapidly.

*Three great discoveries of natural science* were particularly important in shaping and substantiating the dialectical materialist views on nature. These were the discovery of the law of conservation and transformation of energy, the theory of the cellular structure of animal organisms and Darwin's theory of evolution.

The law of conservation and transformation of energy, discovered by the Russian scientist Lomonosov, the German scientist Mayer and the British physicist Joule, convincingly demonstrates the material unity of the world and indestructibility of matter and motion. At the same time this law also shows that matter and motion are qualitatively diverse, variable and capable of passing from some forms to others.

The theory of the cellular structure of living tissue, evolved by the Russian botanist Goryaninov, the Czech botanist Purkyne and the German scientists Schleiden and Schwann, showed that a material element, the cell, is the foundation of any more or less complex organism. By demonstrating the ability of the cell to change, they opened the way to a proper understanding of development of organisms.

With his theory of evolution, Charles Darwin, the great British natural scientist, put an end to the view that the species of plants and animals are accidental, unconnected with anything, are god-created and immutable. He scientifically proved that the complex, higher organisms had been formed from the simple, lower ones, moreover, not by divine will, but through the action of the laws of natural selection inherent in nature itself. Darwin also demonstrated that man too is a product of prolonged evolution of living matter. This corroborated the fundamental idea of dialectics, the idea of development, the transition from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex.

Alongside the achievements of natural science, the successes of philosophical thought in that period were also of great importance in shaping a Marxist world outlook.

Creating dialectical and historical materialism, Marx and Engels profoundly studied the history of philosophy and made use of what was best in philosophical thought after the many centuries of its development. The German classical philosophy of the 19th century, above all the philosophy of Hegel and Feuerbach, is, in fact, the direct theoretical source of Marxist philosophy.

Marx and Engels did not arrive at dialectical materialism at once, but traversed an intricate path. In their youth they were attracted by the idealist philosophy of Hegel, which was widespread in Germany at that time. Like Hegel, they then regarded history as the development of human consciousness.

For their political views in that period Marx and Engels were revolutionary democrats, champions of the interests of all the working people. Sharply criticising the Prussian landlord state, they arrived at the conclusion that only a state of the people could express the interests of the working majority of the population.

The materialism of Feuerbach exerted a great influence on Marx and Engels and helped them to discard Hegelian idealism and to become consistent materialists. But while making use of Feuerbach's philosophy, the founders of Marxism were not satisfied with its contemplative nature, isolation from life, from the people's struggle for liberation. Marx and Engels were firmly convinced that major philosophical and social problems must be solved not in the solitude of studies, but in practice, in the revolutionary, political struggle.

Participation in the social and political struggle on the side of the working people and profound study of natural science, philosophy and history convinced Marx and Engels of the insolvency of idealism and made them side resolutely with the working class. In the philosophical sphere this was expressed in the creation by them of a qualitatively new philosophy, dialectical and historical materialism.

In laying the foundations of their philosophy, Marx and Engels made use of Hegel's dialectics and Feuerbach's materialism which they critically reworked, cleansed of various unscientific sediments and enriched with the vast

experience of the proletariat's revolutionary struggle and the latest scientific achievements.

*By creating dialectical and historical materialism, Marx and Engels brought about a revolution in philosophy.*

## 2. The Essence of the Revolution in Philosophy Brought About by Marxism

To ascertain the essence of this revolution means to establish what is *new* that Marx and Engels introduced to philosophy, to find the new *qualitative* distinctions which set Marxist philosophy apart from the earlier philosophical systems.

What is there fundamentally new in the philosophy of Marxism?

It differs first of all from the philosophical systems of the past by its *class nature, by its role in social life.*

Philosophers prior to Marx, with very few exceptions, expressed the interests of the exploiters and for that reason did not aim to remake the world in the interest of the working people.

The situation is entirely different as regards Marxist philosophy. It expresses the interests of the most progressive class, the proletariat, the interests of the masses. Marx and Engels were not only the founders of the new philosophy, but also the *leaders of the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat.* It is they who showed that the only road to the emancipation of the working people passes through the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. They dedicated their entire intellectual genius, creative energies and outstanding organisational abilities to the lofty cause of emancipating the working class from exploitation, to the cause of socialism.

Having sided with the oppressed class, the proletariat, Marx and Engels created a philosophy which is its spiritual weapon in the struggle against capitalism, a powerful instrument for remaking life. This immeasurably raised the role of philosophy in social development. Having gripped the minds of the working people, this philosophy became a great material force. "The philosophers have only

*interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point however is to *change* it"*—this is how Marx described the cardinal distinction of dialectical and historical materialism. Marxist philosophy is strong because it is organically bound up with life itself, serves the struggle of the working class against capitalism, for socialism and communism.

*Attainment of organic unity of materialism and dialectics* is the most important manifestation of the revolution in philosophy made by Marxism.

We know from the history of philosophy that both dialectics and materialism originated long before Marxism. But the fault of the old philosophy was that materialism and dialectics were separated from each other. Hegel was a dialectician, but not a materialist, Feuerbach was a materialist, but not a dialectician. Only Marx and Engels bridged the gap between dialectics and materialism and achieved their unity in one dialectical-materialist world outlook.

The rise of Marxism also signified a *revolution in the views on society*.

Pre-Marxist philosophers had an idealistic understanding of social development; they saw the driving forces of this development in the ideas of people, in their consciousness. Marx and Engels contrasted to this the materialist understanding of history. They for the first time raised and correctly solved the fundamental question of philosophy—the relation of thought to being—as applied to society. They proved that it is not the social consciousness of people that determines their being, but on the contrary social being, and above all the production of material values, that determines social consciousness; that the development of society depends on material causes, and not on the ideas, wishes or intentions of people. As a result, the history of society came to be understood not as a chaotic conglomeration of phenomena, but as a law-governed, necessary process of the replacement of some lower modes of production by other higher modes; moreover, it was proved that this replacement occurs not accidentally but according to objective laws, independent of man's will and consciousness.**

* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, p. 405.

** The Marxist theory of social development is outlined in detail in the section "Historical Materialism".

Bourgeois philosophers often claim that their philosophy is "non-partisan", that it is supposed to express the interests of all people regardless of their class affiliation. But why is it that many of these philosophers in times of social strife side with the capitalists, defend private property and justify exploitation and war? This means that under the guise of impartiality they conceal the class, partisan nature of bourgeois philosophy.

In contrast to the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, the founders of Marxism-Leninism openly proclaimed the inseparable connection of philosophy with politics, with the interests of definite social classes and parties. Philosophy is the product of a particular epoch, a definite class and that is why it always expresses the requirements of that epoch, defends the interests of that class. Partisanship of philosophy implies serving definite social forces. Partisanship of Marxist philosophy of course does not at all mean that a Marxist philosopher must be a member of the Communist Party, but he must uphold the interests of the working class and of all the working people.

Marxist philosophy arose as the spiritual weapon of the working class in its struggle against the bourgeoisie. Its proletarian partisanship consists above all in selfless service to the working class, to the working people and irreconcilability towards the bourgeoisie. The principle of partisanship of philosophy demands, as Lenin wrote, "... to pursue your *own* line and combat the *whole line* of forces and classes hostile to us".*

Partisanship in philosophy requires taking a definite stand in the struggle between materialism and idealism which has been going on for over 2,000 years. Today this struggle, far from coming to an end, has grown infinitely stronger and is expressed in the bitter clash of dialectical materialism and idealist philosophy. Partisanship in Marxist-Leninist philosophy means to adhere firmly to consistent materialist positions, to defend and develop dialectical

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 343.

and historical materialism in every way, to spare no effort in combating any ideology hostile to Marxism, any manifestation of idealism and clericalism. This demand has acquired special relevance at the present time when the whole world is the arena of a bitter struggle between the two ideologies—socialist and bourgeois—when the bourgeoisie uses the most refined forms of idealism and clericalism in combating the philosophy of Marxism.

Contemporary revisionists, following in the wake of bourgeois ideologists, distort the Marxist-Leninist principle of partisanship in philosophy and claim that partisanship is incompatible with a scientific and objective method. Moreover, they picture bourgeois ideology as a philosophy standing above classes; hence, they say, it is the only scientific ideology. They demand renunciation of the struggle against this ideology, since it is supposed to contain general human knowledge, useful to and needed by all classes of society.

In reality, the bourgeoisie is constantly giving a false picture of the laws of social development in order to save capitalism from the doom to which it is condemned by history. On the other hand, the proletariat is remaking the world and for this purpose it needs knowledge of the real laws. It therefore stands for science, because only a scientific world outlook can serve as a reliable guide to action.

The ultimate goal of the proletariat is the victory of communism and the movement to communism is the objective content of modern society's development. Consequently, the objective course of history and the class interests of the proletariat fully coincide. That is why *a combination of the consistent defence of the proletariat's interests and scientific objectivity is the major characteristic of partisanship in Marxist-Leninist philosophy.*

### 3. The Creative Character of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy

The philosophy of Marxism is not a collection of immutable, rigid principles which have to be accepted blindly, but a *creative*, *developing* science. It does not stand still,

but moves forward, marching in step with the constant changes of life, and is daily enriched by the most recent practical experience of society and the attainments of natural science.

Marxist philosophy arose when capitalism was on the upgrade, was making progress, when social development was relatively slow and calm. At the end of the 19th and in the early 20th century, the historical situation changed radically, and capitalism passed into its last stage, imperialism, when the economic and political contradictions became extremely acute. The period of relatively peaceful development gave way to social storms and revolutions.

This period of a radical break-up of social relations coincided in point of time with a revolution in natural science. The discovery of the electron and of radioactivity and other major scientific accomplishments led to a collapse of the old, metaphysical ideas about matter and its properties.

These new conditions naturally necessitated the creative development of Marxist philosophy. The new experience of the proletariat's revolutionary struggle, the latest achievements of natural science had to be generalised. This was the more important, since the forces hostile to Marxism became more active and intensified their attacks on dialectical and historical materialism.

At the end of the 19th century the centre of the international revolutionary movement began to shift to Russia where a socialist revolution was maturing. Russia became the homeland of Leninism. *Leninism is Marxism of the new historical epoch, the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism and the building of communist society*. Therefore it is not fortuitous that the further creative development of Marxism is indissolubly bound up with the name of the leader of the Russian and international proletariat, Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924). Lenin's contribution to philosophy is so great and multifarious that it constitutes a whole stage in the history of philosophical thought.

## *The Leninist Stage in Philosophy*

The Leninist stage in the development of philosophy covers the period from the end of the 19th century to the present time.

Lenin made a great contribution to philosophy by upholding and further developing dialectical and historical materialism in the new historical conditions. His theoretical work was directly bound up with the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the building of socialism in the Soviet Union. Lenin not only enriched the philosophy of Marxism, but also directed the application of its principles in practice. He founded the Communist Party, a party of a new, revolutionary type. Under the leadership of this Party, the workers and peasants of Russia abolished capitalism and established the first socialist state in the world. Lenin drew up the plan for building socialism and to the last days of his life led the people and the Party in carrying out this plan.

The new historical epoch set before the working class and its Marxist party the task of remaking society in a revolutionary way, of abolishing capitalism and building socialism. That is why Lenin devoted particular attention to analysing the laws governing social development and, first of all, to disclosing the essence of imperialism. Taking into account the changed historical conditions, Lenin further developed the Marxist theory of the socialist revolution which exerted a tremendous impact on the course of social development.

Lenin also enriched the Marxist teaching on classes and the class struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat and its forms, the role of the people in history, the role of the party of the working class, of progressive ideas, and so on.

He made a great contribution to the elaboration of problems of dialectics. In the struggle against metaphysicians of all kinds he upheld and developed further the Marxist doctrine of the laws and categories of materialist dialectics. He devoted particular attention to the core of dialectics—the law of the unity and struggle of opposites.

Lenin developed the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge. He made a deep and all-round analysis of the

crisis in natural science which arose at the turn of the century and was caused by the latest scientific discoveries. He pointed out that only materialist dialectics could resolve this crisis.

Lenin consistently combated bourgeois ideology, revisionism and dogmatism. By exposing the essential features of revisionism and dogmatism and indicating the tendencies of their development, he armed Marxists for the struggle against present-day revisionists and dogmatists.

Lenin's contribution to Marxist philosophy will be examined in more detail later in the book.

After Lenin the philosophy of Marxism was, and is being, developed by his colleagues and pupils, outstanding leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the fraternal Communist and Workers' parties.

Decisions of the congresses and conferences of the C.P.S.U. and other Marxist-Leninist parties, and decisions of international meetings of Communists represent a further development of the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. These documents attest to the able application of the propositions and conclusions of Marxist philosophy in analysing the historical situation, in guiding the revolutionary struggle and in building socialism and communism.

An especially outstanding contribution to Marxist-Leninist theory was made by the 20th, 21st and 22nd congresses of the C.P.S.U. The resolutions and materials of these congresses and the reports of Nikita Khrushchov are distinguished by a genuinely creative approach to basic problems of communist construction and the international liberation movement. Constructive solutions were found for such cardinal problems as the dictatorship of the proletariat in present-day conditions; the laws governing the development of socialism into communism; the ways of building the material and technical basis of communism; formation of communist social relations and the education of the new man; diversity of forms of transition from capitalism to socialism; the more or less simultaneous entry of socialist countries into communism; the possibility of preventing a world war in our time; the nature of the contemporary epoch, etc.

The immense theoretical work of the C.P.S.U. is most

fully embodied in its new Programme, adopted by the 22nd Party Congress, which is a *concrete, scientifically elaborated programme of building communism*. The Programme of the C.P.S.U., this outstanding theoretical and political document of our age, signifies a *new stage* in the development of the revolutionary theory of Marx, Engels and Lenin. It creatively generalises the work of building socialism, takes into account the experience of the revolutionary movement the world over and, giving expression to the collective ideas of the Party, defines the chief tasks and main stages of communist construction.

The philosophy of Marxism-Leninism develops in fierce struggle against reactionary bourgeois ideology, idealism and clericalism. The centuries-old history of philosophy has not eliminated the division of philosophers into two camps—materialists and idealists. To this day the battle of these trends reflects the struggle between progressive and reactionary class forces.

As the world outlook of the revolutionary proletariat and all the working people, Marxist-Leninist materialist philosophy is a formidable weapon in the struggle against imperialist reaction, for socialism and progress. It is opposed by the idealist philosophy of the imperialist bourgeoisie, whose aim is to defend capitalism, to keep millions of workers in the grip of idealism, to refute Marxism-Leninism and prevent the ideas of materialism and scientific communism from influencing the people.

There are many trends and schools in contemporary bourgeois philosophy, but the differences between them are inessential. In the main thing—their idealist substance and service to imperialist reaction—they are all alike. Some of these trends openly advocate idealism, mysticism and hatred for science. Others do so in a more refined way, seeking to utilise the latest achievements of science for this purpose, and to adapt themselves to the requirements of social development. Still others openly revive medieval scholasticism* and attempt to provide justification for the dogmas of religion.

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* Scholasticism (from the Latin *schola*—school) is a religious idealist school of philosophy which prevailed in the Middle Ages and ruled undivided in the system of education.

Despite the efforts exerted by the ideologists of the contemporary bourgeoisie, they will not succeed in refuting Marxist-Leninist theory.

The philosophy of Marxism is now the prevailing world outlook in the socialist countries inhabited by more than 1,000 million people. Dialectical materialism is gradually winning the minds and hearts of people in the capitalist countries and more and more honest men and women the world over are siding with Marxism, having become convinced of the bankruptcy of idealism, its incompatibility with social progress and with the development of science. One of the many examples of this is the noted Japanese philosopher Kenjuro Yanagide, known for a long time as an idealist, who through practical experience and after many years of doubt and searching for the truth became a Marxist.

Dialectical materialism is gaining an ever firmer place in contemporary natural science, being not only the outlook of natural scientists in the socialist countries, but also of many scientists in capitalist states. The eminent French scientist Frederick Joliot Curie, the British scientist John Bernal and many others took up positions of dialectical materialism. Many other natural scientists are shedding their idealist illusions.

Our age is a witness to the triumph of materialism and the deep crisis and degradation of idealism. And although idealism is still fighting materialist philosophy, the outcome of this battle is beyond all doubt: the future belongs to the scientific, Marxist-Leninist world outlook.

*PART ONE*

# DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

*Chapters IV-IX*

Matter and the Forms of Its Existence

Matter and Consciousness

Dialectical Materialism as the Doctrine of Development and Universal Connection

Basic Laws of Materialist Dialectics

Categories of Materialist Dialectics

The Theory of Knowledge of Dialectical Materialism

*CHAPTER IV*

# MATTER AND THE FORMS OF ITS EXISTENCE

We already know that the main thing in the subject matter of dialectical materialism is the solution of the fundamental question of philosophy—the relation of matter to consciousness. Let us now analyse in detail *what is matter and what are the forms of its existence.*

## 1. What Is Matter

Man is surrounded by an infinite number of the most diverse bodies. These include both bodies of inorganic nature—from infinitesimal particles of the atom to huge cosmic bodies—and living organisms, from the simplest to the most complex. Some are next to us; we live amidst them and constantly feel their presence, while others are removed from us by exceptionally great distances. Some we see with the naked eye, but to observe others we have to use the most intricate instruments and equipment. These bodies possess the most diverse properties, qualities and features.

Amazed by the diversity of the world, man long ago mused over the possibility that all the surrounding bodies stem from a single basis.

Gradually, man's practical activities and the development of science have convinced him that however much objects and phenomena differ, however diverse their properties are, they are all material and exist outside and independent of his consciousness. Natural science has thus indisputably proved that the Earth had existed many millions

of years before man and life in general appeared on it. This signifies that matter, nature are objective and independent of man and his consciousness, and that consciousness itself is merely a product of the prolonged evolution of the material world.

The philosophical concept, or category, of matter expresses the general property of objects and phenomena, which consists in their being objective reality, existing outside of man's consciousness and reflected in his consciousness.

The category of matter is an extremely broad concept, encompassing not some separate object or process, not some group of objects and phenomena, but *all of objective reality*. Abstracting itself from the given distinctions, properties and sides of separate objects, from their concrete connections and interaction, this concept expresses the *common, main thing* in all these objects, namely, *objectivity*, i.e., the independence of their existence from man's consciousness.

The concept of matter not only gives an idea of the general properties of the objective world as such, but is also a *primary category of knowledge*. Pointing to man's ability to cognise the world, indicating the source of our knowledge, it also provides the basis for solving major problems of the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism.

Recognition of the objectivity of the world around us and recognition of the ability of the human mind to cognise this world constitute the basic principles of the dialectical-materialist world outlook. This means that the concept of matter, reflecting these cardinal principles, is the most important, pivotal category of dialectical materialism.

The concept of matter is also of great importance for the other sciences, particularly natural science. Any science would be reduced to a meaningless exercise of the human mind if it did not study one or another aspect of objective reality.

A truly scientific, all-embracing definition of matter was given by Lenin in his book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. "Matter is a philosophical category," he wrote, "denoting the objective reality which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and

reflected by our sensations, while existing independently of them."*

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of the Leninist definition of matter. Summing up mankind's experience over the centuries, it gives people a correct understanding of the world around them, teaches them to proceed in their practical work and theoretical studies from reality itself, from the objective material conditions and not from their own, subjective ideas. Asserting that the world is knowable, it opens up boundless vistas to human reason, stimulates the mind and helps man penetrate the deepest secrets of the world.

This definition of matter reflects the fundamental contrast of materialism to idealism and agnosticism. It also has deep atheistic meaning, for it undermines the religious fable that god is the creator of the world. Indeed, if matter is primary and eternal, it is uncreatable and indestructible, it is the inner, final cause of everything existing. In a world where matter is the primary cause, the primary foundation of everything, there is room neither for god nor any other supernatural forces.

That is why idealists and the clergy have always bitterly fought against recognition of matter. Idealists of the past, from Plato to Berkeley, engaged in "destroying" the concept of matter, while machists**even launched a crusade against it. Today there are numerous idealists and revisionists who continue the battle. The purpose of the manifold attacks on the concept of matter has been to undermine the fundamental concept of materialism, to drive matter out of philosophy and science and thereby clear the way for religion, idealism and agnosticism.

These attacks, however, are absolutely pointless. Scientific progress and all man's practical experience conclusively prove that matter as objective reality exists and that it is infinite and eternal. All things, objects and processes are

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 130.

** Machists are representatives of an idealist trend in philosophy at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries named after the Austrian philosopher Ernst Mach. Lenin gave a profound and comprehensive critique of machism in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* published in 1909.

merely manifestations or forms of matter in motion. That is why the world around us is a *single material world*. But the forms of matter, as is evident from personal experience and scientific achievements, are diverse. This signifies that the material world is a *unity of diversity*. In the material world there is not a single thing, however minute, which can arise out of nothing or disappear without trace. The destruction of one thing gives rise to another and this to a third, and so on *ad infinitum*. Concrete things change, they are transformed one into another but in the process matter neither disappears nor is created anew.

### *The Concept of Matter and the Picture of the World Given by Natural Science*

The philosophical concept of matter must be distinguished from the *picture of the world given by natural science*, from the views on the structure, state and properties of *concrete* forms of matter which are elaborated by natural science in the course of its development. These views constantly change, develop and at times undergo a radical transformation. This, however, does not affect the truth of the philosophical understanding of matter as objective reality existing outside of our consciousness.

In an effort to "refute" materialism idealists deliberately confuse the philosophical concept of matter with the views of natural science on the structure of concrete material bodies. A change in these views, renunciation of old ideas and their replacement by new, more exact and improved ideas, is held up by them as the "disappearance" of matter, as the "collapse" of materialism.

For many centuries metaphysical materialists, for example, identified matter with the atom, which they regarded as impenetrable and indivisible. But at the end of the 19th century scientists discovered the electron, a minute integral part of the atom, and then other particles came to light as well. As a result, the atom, which for centuries had been regarded as the ultimate, indivisible unit of the world, appeared to man as an unusually complex phenomenon. The properties of the electron proved entirely unlike

the properties of the atom. This confused metaphysically-thinking physicists, while idealist philosophers, who took advantage of the ensuing difficulties, gained a pretext for speaking about the "dematerialisation" of the atom and the "disappearance" of matter.

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin demonstrated the full untenability of these assertions. He showed that the latest discoveries of natural science result in the disappearance not of matter, but only of the limit to matter which we knew until then. Yesterday the limit of our knowledge was the atom, today it is the electron, while tomorrow this limit too will disappear. Our knowledge reaches deep into matter, revealing more and more of its properties, its ever deeper and finer formations. It was such a form of matter that was revealed by the discovery of the electron. Lenin, referring to the latest achievements of science, concluded that "the electron is as *inexhaustible* as the atom, nature is infinite".*

Lenin's ideas on the qualitative diversity of matter and the inexhaustible diversity of its structure and properties have been fully corroborated by the findings of contemporary science, and of physics in particular.

*Substance* is one of the kinds of matter known in modern physics. Everything that has a mechanical mass or, as physicists say, a rest mass, is a substance. All visible or, as they are also called, macroscopic bodies that surround man are substantive. These bodies consist of molecules which in turn contain atoms. Bodies, molecules and atoms are exceptionally diverse. This, however, does not exhaust the qualitative diversity of substance. The atoms themselves have a very intricate structure, consisting of so-called elementary particles—protons and neutrons—which make up the nucleus and electrons that revolve around the nucleus at a tremendous speed. The enumerated particles and also other "elementary" particles known to science (mesons, hyperons, neutrinos, etc.) are the smallest particles of substance known today. They are called elementary, because so far scientists have not succeeded in splitting them into smaller material formations. There is no doubt,

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 262.

however, that they too, like the atom, have an intricate structure. It is worth noting that elementary particles exist not only as part of atoms and nuclei, but also in a free state. Many of these particles, for example, are contained in cosmic radiation.

In recent years, anti-particles (positrons, antiprotons and others) have been discovered; they differ from the corresponding particles of substance (electron, proton) by the opposite sign of the electrical charge.

When Lenin wrote *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* only one elementary particle was known, the electron. Since then scientists have discovered more than 30 elementary particles which are mobile, variable and transmutable. Physicists have discovered not only the multifarious particles of the atom but, by establishing their diverse properties, have also demonstrated that these particles, like the atom, are inexhaustible. Today the electron can no longer be conceived as some kind of an unchanging tiny sphere. It possesses properties of discontinuity and continuity, or properties of both a particle and a wave and also a mass, an electrical charge, and a magnetic moment. Other elementary particles too possess a similar wide range of properties.

The *field* is another basic kind of matter known to modern science. The physical field is a material formation which interconnects bodies and transmits action from one body to another. The gravitational field (gravity) and the electromagnetic field (light is one of its varieties) were known already in the 19th century. Photons are elements, particles of the electromagnetic field, differing from particles of substance in that they have no rest mass characteristic of the latter. Moreover, in a vacuum photons always travel at a constant velocity of 300,000 kilometres per second, whereas the velocity of particles of substance can vary greatly, but cannot be greater than that of photons.

In addition to the gravitational and electromagnetic fields there are also the nuclear, meson and electron-positron fields. Corresponding to each field are definite particles, whose properties are not identical with the properties of photons.

Thus, both substance and field are diverse and inexhaustible in their structure and properties.

The boundaries between substance and field are distinct only in the macroscopic, visible world. In the sphere of micro-processes, however, these boundaries are relative. Some particles of substance (for example, mesons) are at the same time also particles (quanta) of the corresponding field. Substance and field are inextricably connected; they interact and under certain circumstances are capable of being transformed one into another. Two particles of substance (electron and positron) in certain conditions can be transformed into a photon, a particle of the electromagnetic field. The practical realisation of this experiment was one of the greatest achievements of physics, which once again demonstrated the material unity of the world, its changeability and mobility.

Studies of the larger type of molecules, known as polymeric chemical compounds (rubber, proteins, cellulose, starch and others), have provided an important contribution to the theory of the structure of matter. The main distinction of these compounds is that they are formed through numerous repetitions of similar groups of atoms bound into chains or other more complex formations.

By the discovery of polymers, the human mind penetrated a field which really lies on the boundary between the micro- and the macro-world. Since many of the polymeric compounds, particularly proteins, serve as material for the formation of living substance, their successful study is an important step in ascertaining the essence of the phenomena of life, in mastering and controlling vital processes.

All the achievements of modern physics, chemistry and other sciences thus confirm the theses of dialectical materialism concerning the objectivity of matter, the unity and diversity of the world, the infinity of matter and boundlessness of human knowledge. It should be noted, however, that each science, notwithstanding its great accomplishments, also has its difficulties and unsolved problems which are utilised by the foes of scientific knowledge. Churchmen, for example, declare that science is incapable of overcoming these difficulties and call for abandoning the scientific methods of research and turning to god, to faith; only faith, the "unity of man and god", is capable, in their opinion, of revealing the true picture of the world.

The difficulties met in science are utilised both by bourgeois philosophers and some idealist physicists to refute materialism. Taking advantage of the fact that "elementary" particles cannot be observed directly, they declare them to be mere logical (mental) constructions, and not material bodies.

Actually, however, the atomic particles are just as material and objective as the atom itself, as the molecules formed from atoms and the bodies formed from molecules. All of them are only elements of one nature, the material world.

And so our knowledge about the structure and properties of definite material formations, whether electron, atom, molecule or any other body, is relative, and subject to change. It changed in the past and will change again in the future. But for all that matter remains an objective reality. It is the categorical, unqualified recognition of the existence of matter outside man's consciousness and sensations that sets dialectical materialism apart from all forms of idealism, including agnosticism.

The world by its nature, as we have seen, is material, everything existing represents various forms and kinds of matter. But matter is not something inert and stagnant. It constantly moves in time and space. Motion, space and time are the basic forms of being of matter. For a deeper understanding of the material essence of the world we have to examine these forms. We shall begin with motion.

## 2. Motion — a Form of Existence of Matter

Matter exists only in motion, through which it manifests or reveals itself. The facts of daily life, the development of science and practice have given convincing proof of this.

Let us take, for example, the atom. It exists as a definite material body only in so far as the elementary particles forming it are in constant motion. Outside of the motion of these particles the atom could not exist, nor could there be any other body without motion. As soon as metabolic interchange between the organism and the environment ceases (this is also a form of motion), the living organism at once perishes.

Due to motion material bodies manifest themselves, act on our sense-organs. The Sun, for example, constantly irradiates a multitude of moving particles into cosmic space. When they reach the Earth, these particles act on our sense-organs and make the existence of the Sun known to us. If it were not for the movement of these particles we would not even suspect the Sun's existence; after all, the Sun is about 150 million kilometres away from the Earth.

Similarly, all other material bodies exist, manifest themselves only in motion. Not only elementary particles in atoms are in motion, but also the atoms in molecules and the molecules in bodies. The whole vast mass of terrestrial and cosmic bodies is in motion. Likewise living organisms and social life undergo changes. It is impossible to find a single particle of the material world which does not move or change.

*Motion* is thus a *form of the existence of matter*, its inalienable attribute. "*Motion is the mode of existence of matter*. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, nor can there be,"* Engels wrote.

### *Motion Is Absolute, Rest Is Relative*

The motion of matter is *absolute and eternal*, it can neither be created nor destroyed, inasmuch as matter itself is uncreatable and indestructible. The law of conservation and transformation of energy is the proof furnished by natural science that motion is uncreatable and indestructible. This law states that, like matter, motion does not disappear and does not arise anew, but is merely modified, is converted from one form into another.

But if motion is eternal, absolute, can we speak of rest? Of course we can. In the course of material changes there are also moments of equilibrium, of rest. But they affect not matter in its entirety, but only particular objects and processes. The absoluteness of motion necessarily presupposes rest as well, the latter being a prerequisite for the development of the world. An object arises in motion, while rest fixes, as it were, the result of motion, in consequence of which

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* Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1959, p. 86.

this object is preserved for a certain time and remains what it is.

In contrast to the absoluteness of motion, rest is *relative* and must not be understood as some kind of a dead, inert state. A body can be at rest only in relation to some other body, but it necessarily takes part in the general motion of matter. The house in which we live is in a state of rest in relation to the Earth's surface, but it revolves around the Earth's axis, and together with the Earth, around the Sun, etc. Moreover, even when a body is in a state of rest, physical, chemical or other processes take place in it all the time.

The motion of matter is eternal, absolute, while rest is temporary, relative, it is only a moment of motion.

### *Forms of Motion of Matter*

The universal character of the motion of matter was also recognised by pre-Marxist materialists, but they interpreted it in a narrow, metaphysical way. They did not associate motion with change, development of bodies, but often conceived it only as mechanical displacement in space.

Dialectical materialism does not reduce the diversity of forms of motion to a single mechanical or any other form, but associates motion with change, development of bodies, the coming into being of the new and the passing away of the old. Motion is understood by dialectical materialism as any *change in general* which encompasses all the processes transpiring in the Universe—from the simplest mechanical displacement, to such an extremely complex process as human thinking.

There are many kinds and forms of motion. Dialectical materialism, drawing on the achievements of natural science, classifies the kinds of motion, singling out from their diversity the *basic* forms. Engels gave the first scientific classification of the forms of motion of matter. In the basic forms he included: mechanical, physical, chemical, biological and social; moreover, he associated each one with a definite form of matter—mechanical, with celestial and terrestrial bodies; physical, with molecules, etc.

Engels' classification of the main forms of motion still retains its scientific value, but the latest achievements

of science have substantially enriched our knowledge of these forms.

In the 19th century *mechanical motion*, for example, was chiefly understood as the displacement of macroscopic bodies in space. Now, however, it has been established that spatial displacement is inherent in all material formations, from elementary particles to a living organism. Mechanical motion must not be associated only with one form of matter, macroscopic, that is, visible bodies. This motion is inherent in any kind of matter, in any other form of motion, although in other, non-mechanical forms, it is of a subordinate, auxiliary character.

Our ideas concerning the *physical* form of motion of matter have been substantially enriched, above all due to the profound penetration of physics into the atom. Scientists have discovered and studied such hitherto unknown kinds of physical motion as intra-atomic and intra-nuclear motion. Engels associated the physical form of motion chiefly with molecular processes. In the light of contemporary data, however, this form of motion embraces thermal, electrical, magnetic, intra-atomic and intra-nuclear processes as well as numerous other processes in solid, liquid and gaseous bodies owing to the movement of elementary particles.

The *chemical form* of motion of matter is connected with the association or dissociation of atoms, with the resultant formation or break-up of molecules, of which all chemical compounds consist. Chemical processes are accompanied by the motion of electrons forming the outer shell of atoms. Chemical transmutations are widespread in both inorganic and organic nature.

*Biological motion* is one of the most complex forms of motion of matter, encompassing all the diverse processes in living organisms. These processes are associated with protein bodies, the carriers of life, which maintain continuous metabolic interchange with their environment. This metabolism results in a constant self-regeneration of the chemical composition of the protein bodies, which is the chief characteristic of any living thing.

*Social life*, the history of human society, is an even higher form of motion of matter, which differs essentially and qualitatively from all the preceding ones. It appeared with

the rise of human society and its major distinction is the process of material production, determining all other aspects of social life.

The forms of motion of matter are *interconnected and inseparable*. Their unity and interconnection is based on the material unity of the world. One form of motion, given appropriate conditions, can be converted into another. Mechanical motion, for example, may cause heat, sound, light, electricity and other kinds of physical motion. The interaction of physical processes leads to chemical transformations, while chemical processes in certain conditions give rise to organic life.

The lower forms are necessarily included in the higher form of motion of matter. For example, biological motion is connected with definite mechanical, physical and chemical processes. But higher forms of motion cannot be reduced to lower ones. The higher form of motion possesses its own particular laws, which distinguish it from the lower and determine its qualitative specific features. Thus, the laws of metabolism set organic life apart from inorganic nature. The mechanical, physical and chemical processes inherent in organisms have no independent significance and are subordinated to the chief process in the organism—metabolism.

Recognition of the absolute and universal character of motion, with necessary account of the qualitative distinction of each form, the ability of these forms to become mutually transformed, and the impossibility of reducing the higher forms to lower ones—this is the essence of the dialectical-materialist concept of motion.

### *Matter Cannot Be Divorced from Motion*

We have stated earlier that there can be no inert, immobile state of matter, that matter and motion are inseparable. Yet even today some people think of matter as such without motion, divorcing matter from motion.

Such, for example, are the supporters of the so-called theory of the heat death of the Universe which, distorting the findings of science, predicts the coming "end" of the world, the "death" of everything existing. It proceeds from the fact, long ago established by science, that all forms of

energy are easily converted into thermal energy, while the reverse process is rather more complex and demands an additional expenditure of energy. It is also true that any heated body, placed in an environment with a lower temperature, cools, transferring its heat to it. Applying these principles to the entire Universe, these theorists arrive at the conclusion that, in time, the incandescent celestial bodies will transfer all their heat to cold cosmic space. That being the case, the Universe, in their opinion, will ultimately reach a state of "heat balance" or "heat death", turning into a monstrous conglomeration of frozen bodies, while all forms of motion of matter will become thermal energy incapable of further conversion, and matter will lose the ability to move.

Although this theory was criticised and refuted by Engels,* certain idealists and theologians continue to defend it and use it as "proof" that the "end" of the world is inevitable.

Scientifically, the "theory of the heat death of the Universe" is completely unfounded and ignores the law of conservation and transformation of energy which asserts the indestructibility of motion not only quantitatively but also qualitatively, i.e., that motion cannot exist in only one form. Nor can matter exist in a state of immobility, i. e., a state in which motion would no longer pass from one form into another. The transformation of forms of motion is as natural and law-governed as the quantitative conservation of motion during these transformations.

The latest achievements of astronomy show that the cycle of matter in the Universe does not cease for a single moment. In some regions of cosmic space matter and energy are dispersed, in others they are re-concentrated, giving rise to new celestial bodies. Victor Ambartsumyan, member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., has established that new stars are still being formed, not merely as single stars but in entire groups (associations). This proves that there can be no immobile state of matter.

But then, perhaps, motion exists by itself, without any material carrier?

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* See Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1954, pp. 51-54.

This is affirmed by supporters of *energetism*, a trend in philosophy and natural science which arose at the turn of the century. They reduce matter to motion or energy, which is nothing more than a refusal to recognise matter—idealism pure and simple.

Present-day champions of energetism are particularly vociferous in their idealist views. Falsifying the latest achievements of science, they speak of the "annihilation" of matter, its conversion into pure energy. To this end they, for example, interpret in an idealist way the conversion of a pair of elementary particles of substance (electron and positron) into photons, particles of the electromagnetic field (light). By regarding light as "pure" energy without matter, and substance as the only kind of matter, adherents of energetism have arrived at the absolutely erroneous conclusion that in this instance matter disappears, and is converted into energy. The photon, however, is a particle of the field, a special kind of matter. The conversion of the electron and positron into a photon is not transformation of matter into energy, but conversion of one kind of matter, substance, into another—the field.

The complete bankruptcy of energetism is demonstrated by the achievements of modern physics and above all by the law of the interconnection of mass and energy discovered early this century by the great physicist Albert Einstein (1879-1955). According to this law, the mass of a body is always connected with a corresponding quantity of energy. It is difficult to establish this dependence at relatively small speeds, but when a body travels at a velocity close to that of light (and elementary particles possess such velocities during nuclear transformations), the increase of its mass becomes noticeable. That the mass changes depending on velocity has been confirmed experimentally. Mass, however, is a measure of matter, while energy is a measure of motion. Consequently, the given law reveals the direct connection between the unity of matter and motion.

It follows from the above that there is neither matter without motion, nor "pure" motion divorced from matter, nor could there be any. Matter and motion are inseparable.

## 3. Space and Time

### *The Philosophical Concept of Space and Time*

When we look closely at the objects around us we find that each one is not only in motion, but also possesses extension or size. Objects may be big or small, but they all have length, width, height, occupy a definite place, and have a volume. Objects in nature possess not only extension, but are also located in a certain way in relation to each other. Some of them are located farther away from us or nearer to us than others, higher or lower, to the right or to the left.

The philosophical concept of *space* reflects the universal property of material bodies to possess extension, to occupy a definite place and to be located in a particular way among other objects of the world.

Objects not only exist in space, but also follow each other in a definite sequence. The place of some objects is taken by others, which in turn are replaced by others, and so on. Every object possesses duration, has a beginning and an end, and it goes through certain stages or states in its development. Some objects are only beginning to arise, others have already existed for a certain time, while still others are in the process of destruction.

The philosophical concept of *time* reflects the universal property of material processes to follow one after another in a definite sequence, to possess duration and develop by stages.

Space and time are *universal forms of the existence of matter*. "There is nothing in the world but matter in motion, and matter in motion cannot move otherwise than in space and time,"* Lenin wrote.

The most important attribute of space and time is their *objectivity*, i. e., independence of man's consciousness. This is natural because as the main forms of objectively existing matter, they must be objective.

Idealism denies the objectivity of space and time. Subjective idealists consider them the product of man's con-

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 175.

sciousness, while objective idealists claim that they are engendered by the absolute idea, the universal spirit.

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* Lenin convincingly demonstrated the insolvency of idealist views on space and time. If, he wrote, we are to believe the idealists that space and time are merely products of human reason, what happens to the incontrovertible fact, proved by science, that the Earth had existed in space and time long before the appearance of man? The Earth has been in existence for thousands of millions of years, while man only for tens of thousands of years! Clearly, this leaves no room for any "creation" of space and time by man or by some mystical absolute idea, or universal reason.

Pointing to the objectivity of space and time, dialectical materialism also reveals their other most general properties, proceeding from the premise that they are determined by the nature of matter itself. The eternity and infinity of matter thus determine the *eternity* of time and *infinity* of space. This means that they have never had a beginning and will never have an end. Modern science penetrates the distant regions of outer space and studies immense periods of time. With the aid of powerful radio telescopes astronomers, for example, study material bodies at a distance of thousands of millions of light-years from the Earth. Light travelling at a velocity of 300,000 kilometres per second covers in 1,000 million light-years a distance of $9.5 \cdot 10^{21}$ of kilometres! However immense these distances, they are infinitesimally small compared to the scale of the infinite world. Similarly minute, compared to the eternity of the Universe, are the vast periods of time, measured in thousands of millions of years, which modern geology studies.

Space as a form of existence of matter is *tridimensional*, which means that every material body has three dimensions: length, width and height. Correspondingly, bodies can move in the three perpendicular directions.

In contrast to space, time has only one dimension. That is why all bodies develop in time in one direction only, from the past to the future. Time is *irreversible*, it moves only forward and it is impossible to revert its movement, to bring back the past.

Such are the most general properties of space and time.

These philosophical concepts of space and time as universal forms of the existence of matter should be differentiated from the concepts about the spatial-time properties of concrete material objects given by natural science.

As science develops these concepts too are developed and specified, new properties of space and time are discovered and the dependence of these properties on the material nature of bodies is more definitely established.

Classical mechanics, recognising the objectivity of space and time, separated them from matter, held them to be absolutely uniform and immutable. Isaac Newton (1642-1727), the father of classical mechanics, for example, pictured space as a huge receptacle in which things were placed in definite order, but these things themselves supposedly had no relation to space whatsoever.

Newton held that spatial properties of all bodies of the Universe are similar and are fully covered by Euclidean geometry. Euclidean geometry was regarded by Newton as the only possible, the absolute geometry.

The views of Newton on time were similarly metaphysical.

The Russian mathematician Nikolai Lobachevsky (1792-1856) elaborated a new, non-Euclidean geometry, which refuted the metaphysical views on space and extended man's ideas of the spatial properties of bodies. Lobachevsky arrived at the conclusion that the properties of space are not identical in different regions of the Universe, that they depend on the nature of physical bodies, on the material processes taking place in them. Convinced that in nature there are bodies, whose spatial properties do not fit into the framework of Euclidean geometry, he discovered these new properties, demonstrating specifically that the sum of angles of a triangle is not equal to 180°, as in Euclidean geometry, but is smaller.

The *theory of relativity*, elaborated by Albert Einstein, is the modern theory of space and time in natural science. This theory reveals the organic connection of space and time both with each other and with matter in motion.

The *special theory of relativity* demonstrates the dependence of spatial-time properties of bodies on the velocity of their movement. At relatively small velocities it is impossible

to trace this dependence because the spatial-time properties change on a scale which can be practically detected only at speeds close to that of light.

The theory of relativity shows that at speeds close to that of light the length of a moving body compared to a body in a state of rest decreases as the speed increases. Moreover, time too does not remain invariable: with the increase in speed the course of time is slowed down. These conclusions, which follow from the relativity theory, have been corroborated experimentally. For example, the life of the meson (an elementary particle which arises during the fission of an atomic nucleus) is very short, but if its speed is increased, the "lifetime" of the meson is lengthened.

According to the theory of relativity, space and time change not by themselves but in inseparable interconnection. This connection is so firm that they form an unbreakable whole and time acquires, as it were, the role of a fourth dimension, in addition to the three dimensions of space. The theory of relativity also gives a strictly mathematical expression to the organic connection of space and time.

The *general theory of relativity* has demonstrated that the properties of space and time also depend on the presence of masses of matter. Bodies possessing a huge mass and great force of gravity produce a change, or what physics calls a curvature in space near them. Time too changes correspondingly: it slows down.

The conclusions of the theory of relativity, at first glance, seem to run counter to our customary notions about the properties of space and time. But they are true and are confirmed by scientific experiments. Their unusual character merely goes to show that in knowledge man must not confine himself to customary notions, but must go farther, deeper and reveal the entire complexity and diversity of the material world.

We have seen that the concepts about the properties of space and time, given by natural science, have undergone change. But this changeability does not in any way challenge the propositions of dialectical materialism concerning their objective existence. On the contrary, each success of science furnishes more and more proof of the objectivity of space and time and their inseparable connection with matter in motion.

*CHAPTER V*

# MATTER AND CONSCIOUSNESS

We have discussed in the previous chapter what matter is and in what forms it exists. We have also learned that matter exists outside of man's consciousness and independent of it. But what is consciousness, what is its relation to matter, how does it arise? Let us examine these questions.

## 1. Consciousness — a Property of Highly Organised Matter

Before discussing the essence of consciousness let us recall that man's *conscious, spiritual activity* includes his thoughts and emotions, will and character, sensations, ideas, views, etc.

What is the nature of all these phenomena and what is their source?

Natural science and philosophy traversed a long and hard road before they were able to furnish a correct answer to this question. Contemporary science has proved that consciousness is a product of the prolonged evolution of matter. Matter, nature have always existed, while man is a result of a relatively later development of the material world. Millions upon millions of years were required for the development of matter to result in the emergence of man capable of thinking. Consciousness is a product of nature, a property of matter, not all of it, but only of *highly organised matter*, the human brain.

Consciousness, having arisen as a result of the development of matter, is inseparably bound up with it. It is in-

divisible from thinking matter, the brain, whose attribute it is. The Russian physiologists Ivan Sechenov (1829-1905) and Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) established that all mental activity is based on definite, material processes, namely, *physiological* processes, which transpire in the human brain, particularly in the cortex of the cerebral hemispheres. Disturbance of the normal activity of the brain, its lesion owing to a disease, injury or other causes, leads to a sharp derangement in man's thinking, to a mental disorder.

Drawing on numerous experimental data, Pavlov concluded that "...psychical activity is the result of the physiological activity of a certain mass of the brain...."

Pavlov's doctrine of higher nervous activity confirms the fundamental thesis of dialectical materialism concerning the dependence of consciousness on matter. It convincingly demonstrates that the brain and physiological processes in it represent the substratum (basis) of human consciousness, are the material conditions without which thinking is impossible.

But is the human brain alone enough for the functioning of consciousness? Can it think by itself, independent of the influence of the surrounding world upon it?

No, by itself the brain is incapable of thinking. Pavlov said that the brain was not a piano from which one can draw any arias, any music one could wish. Consciousness *is inseparably bound up with man's material environment*, and it cannot function without the influence of this environment. Sensations of sight, sound, smell, etc., arise in the brain only under the influence of objectively existing objects with their intrinsic colours, smells, sounds and other properties. These objects and their properties act on the sense-organs; then the resultant stimuli are transmitted along the nerve channels to the cortex of the cerebral hemispheres where the respective sensations arise. On the basis of sensations there are formed the perceptions, ideas and also concepts and other forms of thought. All of them represent only *images*, more or less exact reflections of objectively existing objects and phenomena. Outside of them these images cannot arise in man's consciousness. This means that ability to *reflect* the material world is the specific distinction of consciousness as a property of the brain.

Thus, in answer to the question about the nature of consciousness we can say that *man's consciousness is a special property of highly organised matter, the brain, to reflect material reality.*

### *Insolvency of Vulgar Materialism and Idealism*

In contrast to dialectical materialism, vulgar materialists * identify matter with consciousness. Vogt, for example, said that the brain secretes thought, that thought stands approximately in the same relation to the brain as the bile to the liver.

Dialectical materialism, fully consistent with the achievements of natural science, rejects the vulgar-materialist understanding of consciousness. Although consciousness is connected with definite material physiological processes it cannot be reduced to these processes. Thought is inseparable from matter, from the brain, but it must not be identified with matter. Lenin held that to regard thought as material means to make a wrong step towards confusing materialism with idealism.

Thought is not a thing, it cannot be seen or photographed. Thought is the *image* of objects and phenomena in the world, an ideal, not a material, image. This is not a simple photograph of reality, not a lifeless copy of it, but reality appropriately transformed in the human mind. Marx wrote about thought that "the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought".** Reality, acting on man, always passes through the prism of the special laws governing thought, such as *analysis and synthesis, generalisation,* etc.... What sets man apart from animals is his ability to think, i.e., to actively reflect reality, to influence it, to set himself certain aims and work for their achievement.

Dialectical materialism rejects the vulgar-materialist understanding of consciousness. It regards as a profound mistake the assertion that consciousness or thought is an

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* Vulgar materialism is a philosophical trend which originated in Germany in the mid-19th century.

** Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1959, p. 19.

attribute of all matter. Spinoza, for example, held that consciousness is as much a necessary attribute (property) of all nature as extension, corporeality.

This view is wrong, because it ignores the qualitative differences between inorganic and organic matter (thinking matter in particular). Lenin held that sensation in a clearly manifest form is inherent only in higher, organic forms of matter, whereas all matter possesses only the property of *reflection*, i.e., the ability to react in a definite way to external influences. To a certain extent this property is akin to sensation, but is not identical with it and therefore consciousness cannot be regarded as a property of all matter.

The advances of a new science, *cybernetics*, have given an impulse to attempts at ascribing the ability to think to objects of inorganic nature. This science studies various control systems and control processes, and has developed remarkable machines. Some of them can guide a plane, a train or a complex production process, others can translate from one language into another, perform extremely difficult mathematical operations, etc. These machines can receive information from outside, "memorise" it, process it and find the best solution. This has given some scientists grounds for ascribing to automatic machines the ability to experience sensations and even to think.

In reality, however, even the most perfect machine does not possess the ability of sensation, let alone of thinking. Sensation and thinking are attributes only of man who is a product of the prolonged evolution of the material world and, in particular, the social environment. Man stands out from nature, cognises reality around him, actively influences and transforms it. He possesses inexhaustible creative powers and creates great cultural treasures. All this is absent from a machine, which is produced by the ingenious brain and skilful hands of man, who, in the final analysis, foresees in advance its functions and builds in "abilities", however complex and wonderful they might seem.

We must not therefore identify consciousness with matter.

But perhaps consciousness exists by itself, independently of matter?

This is assumed by idealists, proceeding from the fact that consciousness is ideal and not material. Their line

of reasoning runs as follows: if thought is ideal, is not a thing and therefore cannot be found in the human brain, it is consequently not connected with matter or the brain, and exists independently. It is allegedly not only independent of matter, but even "creates" it. Idealists refuse to see behind thought its prototype, the things and objects of the objective world.

Attempts to divorce thought from the brain are also absolutely untenable. Lenin aptly called a philosophy which makes such attempts and asserts that thought exists without the brain a "brainless" philosophy. Natural science, Lenin wrote, firmly upholds that consciousness does not exist independently of the body, that it is secondary, a function of the brain, a reflection of the outside world.

At the same time we must not put up consciousness as an absolute antithesis to matter, for consciousness is a property of highly organised matter, it arises and develops under the influence of material factors. But, arising from matter, consciousness acquires a certain independence and actively influences the development of the material world.

## 2. Consciousness — a Product of the Development of Matter

### *The Origin and Development of Consciousness*

As we pointed out earlier, all matter possesses the intrinsic general property of *reflection*, i. e., the *ability to reconstruct itself internally under external influences, to react to them accordingly*. Reflection is always connected with the interaction of two (or more) bodies: the acting and the one subjected to the action. That is why the *character* of reflection depends both on external influences and also on the internal state of the body reacting to the influence.

If we examine in this respect an inorganic body, a living organism and man we find that they reflect the world differently.

Simple, *passive* reflection is inherent in an inorganic body. Such a body does not differentiate between the factors of the environment, does not single out the favourable

ones and is incapable of protecting itself from the unfavourable ones.

A living organism reacts differently to external influences. It *adapts* itself to the environment, reacts in a different way to various external stimuli, making use of favourable factors and avoiding unnecessary, harmful ones. An organism lives and develops only owing to its successful adaptation to the environment.

We find a qualitatively new, higher form of reflection in man who possesses the ability to *consciously* reflect reality. He not only adapts himself to the environment, but acts upon it, transforms it on the basis of the knowledge he has gained.

To establish the *origin of consciousness*, implies tracing how, during the transition from inorganic matter to living matter and thence to thinking matter (the human brain), the non-living, passive reflection turned into active, selective reflection inherent in everything living, and how the ability to think developed from the latter.

### *From Inorganic to Living Matter, and Thence to Thinking Matter*

Natural science commands a vast array of facts showing that *living nature arose out of non-living, inorganic nature.* There is no impassable boundary between them. Chemical analysis shows that both inorganic bodies and living organisms are formed from the same chemical elements. Organisms contain large quantities of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and particularly carbon, which comprises the basis of the chemical composition of living organisms and the products of their vital activity.

Scientists have put forward the hypothesis that the primary gas-dust matter from which our Earth was formed originally contained the simplest compounds of carbon with hydrogen and other substances, *hydrocarbons*, from which the more complex organic compounds were subsequently formed. Entering into chemical associations with each other, the organic compounds became more and more complex until *aminoacids* were formed. These are the basic elements of the *protein* molecules. As organic substances became more

differentiated and complex, their reflective ability became more diverse and intricate too.

Hundreds of millions of years later the molecules of this primary chemical protein, formed from aminoacids, had turned into a living protein body and thereby acquired the property of metabolism, which is the basic feature of everything living. At first these proteins and other complex organic compounds, mixing with inorganic salts, formed special drop-like compounds, *coacervates*, capable of entering into a metabolic interchange with the aquatic environment, of absorbing other organic substances. Then highly complex, *multi-molecular protein* capable of life was formed from the more stable coacervates. Landing in a favourable environment and entering into a metabolic interchange with it, this protein became an *organism*.

*Metabolism* is a contradictory process of *assimilation* (absorption of nutritive substances from the environment and their conversion into the living cells and tissues of the organism) and *dissimilation* (disintegration, destruction of this living tissue). This process is inherent only in living protein in an organism. Metabolic interchange with the environment, constant self-regeneration differentiate the simplest living organism from the most complex non-living body. Only through metabolism, i.e., by assimilating nutritive substances and excreting the products of their disintegration, can an organism live and develop. "Life is the mode of existence of protein bodies, the essential element of which consists in *continual metabolic interchange with the natural environment outside them*, and which ceases with the cessation of this metabolism,"* Engels points out.

The coming into being of the first simplest organisms was a tremendous step forward in the development of reflection, a general intrinsic property of matter, in the emergence of consciousness. Reflection of reality, inherent in inorganic nature, turned into a qualitatively new, *biological* reflection. The simplest form of biological reflection is *response to stimuli*, irritability, which is inherent in all organisms and serves as a means of their orientation or adaptability to the external environment.

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* Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1954, p. 397.

Plants, for example, are very sensitive to sunlight. They literally reach out for it; for them light is the source of life. The simplest monocellular organism, the amoeba, reacts to food stimuli; if it has just swallowed food, the food stimuli have no effect upon it. This means that the amoeba, like any other organism, possessing the property of responding to stimuli, reflects the outside world not passively, but *selectively*. Its organism, as it were, gravitates towards useful, needed stimuli and shuns harmful, unnecessary ones. But its selective power is not great. A simple organism has neither organs nor tissues, nor cells, specially receptive to particular forms of stimuli. It responds to outside excitations in its entirety.

In the course of further evolution, as the organisms themselves and the environment became more complex, an even higher form of reflection, *sensation*, arose on the basis of response to stimuli. Lenin wrote that in sensation the energy of external stimulation is transformed into an instance of consciousness. As with response to stimuli, sensation was a result of the action of the outside world on the organism, but here the range of external stimuli to which the organism responded in one way or another was broadened considerably. The organism reacted to colour, smell and sound, it developed the sensations of taste, cold, heat, moisture and responded to mechanical, physical and other influences. Organs capable of perceiving only a definite range of external influences (colour, sound, smell, etc.) appeared in the organism. Subsequently, as the organisms developed, their sensations became more subtle and diverse. The adaptability of the organism to the environment grew and a special organ for maintaining contact with the environment, the central nervous system, arose.

In the field of biology the study of *reflexes* has graphically shown that the ability to reflect the surrounding world, to become adapted to the environment, is not the same in the case of lower and higher animals. Reflexes are responsive reactions of the organism to external influences. All of them are divided into unconditioned and conditioned reflexes. *Unconditioned reflexes* are inherent in all organisms, both lower and higher. These are inborn or hereditary. A man instantly draws away his hand, if it is touched by something

hot—this is an unconditioned reflex. The intricate intertwining of unconditioned reflexes forms instincts (sex, food and others), which play a big part in the life and development of an organism.

Higher animals, however, also have *conditioned reflexes* which are of a temporary nature and are formed in definite conditions. If for a certain time a dog is fed to the accompaniment of the ringing of a bell, there will come a moment when the dog reacts to the ringing of a bell in the same way as when he is fed: saliva will be secreted. A temporary connection has been formed in the brain of the dog whereby the sound of the bell has become the signal for food. All other conditioned reflexes are formed on the same principle. Thanks to them the organism adapts itself very delicately to the environment and is very sensitive to its influences. The conditioned reflexes which acquire particular importance for the organism become fixed and turn into unconditioned ones; on the basis of the latter new temporary connections arise, part of which again become fixed. Hence, in the course of the evolution of living organisms mentality progressed continuously, and this ultimately led to sentient matter acquiring the ability to *think*.

### *Decisive Role of Labour in the Rise of Consciousness*

Both man and higher animals possess the intrinsic ability to experience sensations. This ability, according to Pavlov, rests on a physiological basis which is common for both man and animals, namely, the *first signal system*. It is a mechanism through which the organism responds directly to the action of concrete objects and phenomena. Being the sole signals for an animal, these objects act on its sense-organs and arouse corresponding sensations in its nervous system.

But man's sensations, in contrast to those of animals, are always illuminated by the light of reason. Man is capable of *abstract thinking*, i.e., of a generalised reflection of reality in concepts expressed in *words*. Every word denotes a definite object with which it is inseparably associated. That is why man reacts to words, just as to the direct influence of the objects themselves. Inasmuch as the first

signals are the objects themselves, the words designating them acquire the role of secondary signals. They, as Pavlov pointed out, are the "signals of signals". The physiological mechanism through which man reacts to words, to speech, was named by him the *second signal system*. This system is an attribute only of man.

The first and the second signal systems are organically connected, giving man an all-round and profound knowledge of reality.

And so, the consciousness of man qualitatively differs from the mentality of animals.

The cause of this difference lies in the fact that the mentality of animals is a product of biological development only, whereas man's consciousness is the result of *historical, social* development.

The very sensations of man radically differ from those of animals. The eyes of an eagle, for example, see much farther than those of man, but man has immeasurably greater insight than the eagle into what is seen.

Marx held that the formation of man's five sense-organs is a product of the whole of world history. Man's musical ear, his eye for nature's beauty, his fine taste and other sense-organs have developed on the basis of the practical experience of human society.

Labour, i. e., production of material values, is the decisive factor in the development of man, in the emergence and development of his consciousness. "Labour created man himself," * Engels pointed out. Due to labour our distant ancestor, the savage, acquired a human mien. Labour gave man food, clothing, shelter and not only protected him from the elemental forces, but also enabled him to subjugate them, to place them at his service. Through labour man changed himself beyond recognition and also changed our planet. Labour is man's greatest possession and is indispensable to his life and development.

Anthropoid apes already had the prerequisites of labour. They used sticks, stones and other simple objects for the procurement of food. But they did it unconsciously and accidentally. Neither apes nor any other animals are capable

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* Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1954, p. 228.

of making even the simplest tool. Man, however, made and used tools, and in this lay the qualitative distinction of his labour. To learn this man needed hundreds of thousands of years, throughout which there took place the highly intricate process of man's emergence and at the same time the formation and development of his consciousness.

The adoption of a vertical posture by anthropoid apes was of great importance in creating conditions for labour and the appearance of the first glimmers of consciousness. This posture meant that the front limbs were relieved of their use as an aid to walking and could now be used for work. At first our distant ancestor used, with the help of his hands, "implements" (sticks and stones) in their natural state and then he gradually began to fashion them himself. The first tools were extremely primitive (a roughly-hewn rock, a sharpened stick, etc.). The consciousness of the man of that age was primitive too. He did not yet distinguish the essence of objects, did not see what they had in common, did not know how they could be of use to him.

The further development and improvement of labour was accompanied by an advance in man's consciousness. As he came in contact with various objects in the course of obtaining his means of subsistence, man learned their properties, compared them and singled out what they had in common and what recurred.

The making and improvement of labour implements was particularly important in the development of consciousness. The implements, passed on from generation to generation, embodied experience and knowledge. Succeeding generations, knowing the methods of making and using the implements of their ancestors, were able to continue to improve and develop them.

The consciousness of primitive man was organically bound up with his labour; it was, so to say, interwoven with his labour activity. And this is understandable because man first of all learned that which was directly connected with his labour, the satisfaction of his wants. It is no accident that the portrayal of man's labour occurs so often in primitive art.

Thus, in unity of labour and thought, and on the basis of labour activity, man's consciousness developed and improved.

### *Language and Thought*

*Language*, articulate speech, was of great importance in forming man's consciousness. Language, which arose together with consciousness on the basis of labour, played a very great part in enabling man to emerge from the animal kingdom, to develop his thinking and organise material production. Labour has always been social. From the first days of their existence people had to unite to fight the mighty forces of nature, to wrest the means of livelihood from it. That is why in the process of labour there arose the need for *communication* between people, the need to *tell* each other something. Through this pressing need the undeveloped larynx of the ape was transformed into an organ capable of uttering articulate sounds. Articulate speech or language thus arose.

Marx called language the *direct reality of thought*. And he did so, because thought can exist only in the material shell of the word. Whether a man thinks to himself, voices his thoughts aloud, or puts them down in writing, the thought is always vested in words. Thanks to language thoughts are not only formed, but also transmitted and perceived. In words and combinations of words man fixes the results of reflection of the objective world in his consciousness, which not only enables people to exchange thoughts, but also to pass them on from one generation to another. Without speech and a written language, the invaluable experience of many generations would be lost and each new generation would be compelled to begin anew the very hard process of studying the world.

Language is not connected with reality directly, but through thought. Hence, at times it is not easy to establish the direct connection of the given word with a specific material object. In different languages and even in one language, frequently the same word denotes various objects, or various words denote the same object. All this creates the illusion that language is independent of reality.

This illusion is pursued by the *semantic idealists*, representatives of a trend in contemporary bourgeois philosophy. They sever language from thought and thought from reality,

maintaining that words are coined by man arbitrarily and do not designate anything real, that words are mere combinations of sounds. From this premise some seek to prove that contemporary capitalism, exploitation, aggression, etc., are merely empty words or sounds. People, they claim, only have to replace these words by others for all sources of social conflict to vanish, for all vices of contemporary capitalism to disappear.

Words are not coined by people arbitrarily, however, but are attached to definite objects and phenomena in the process of knowledge and practical activity. These objective processes are neither changed nor eliminated by the replacement of words. The apologists of capitalism, for example, have coined dozens of sweet-sounding words for describing contemporary capitalist society: "people's capitalism", "affluent society", "economic humanism", etc. But these words have not abolished capitalism and its exploitation, unemployment and class antagonisms. Capitalism will disappear only as a result of struggle by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, as a result of socialist revolution.

Consciousness is thus a product of the prolonged evolution of matter. But, having arisen on the basis of matter, it actively influences the latter's development.

In an effort to discredit materialism, idealists claim that since materialists take matter as the basis of everything existing and maintain that things exist objectively, independent of consciousness, materialists underestimate the role of consciousness, and regard it only as a passive reflection of being.

Dialectical materialism, however, does not in the least underestimate the role of consciousness in the development of matter, of being. As a product of matter and as its reflection, consciousness does not remain passive, but *actively influences* the world. It is in this sense that Lenin wrote that "man's consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it".*

This does not mean, of course, that consciousness directly

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 212.

influences being, or that it creates the world; by itself, thought is incapable of moving even the tiniest blade of grass. What is meant is that consciousness, if it reflects the world correctly, can serve as a *guide* in man's creative work in transforming life.

The active role of consciousness, particularly in the life of society, will be examined in greater detail in later chapters.

*CHAPTER VI*

# DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AS THE DOCTRINE OF DEVELOPMENT AND UNIVERSAL CONNECTION

The philosophy of Marxism is dialectical materialism, in which materialism and dialectics are indissolubly interconnected. In the previous chapters we have examined the essence of Marxist philosophical materialism. Our task now is to analyse in detail *Marxist materialist dialectics* and its practical significance.

## 1. Dialectics — Doctrine of Development

Marxist dialectics, as we pointed out earlier, examines the world in constant movement, change and development. Our daily experience, the development of science and the history of society demonstrate to us that all objects and phenomena of the world are not immutable.

Everything in the world *develops.* The innumerable bodies of the Universe, the solar system, the Earth and everything on it are the product of the prolonged development of matter. Man himself also arose in the process of evolution of the material world.

Human society too is developing, as evidenced especially by the present century, the age of great historical progress and unprecedented social change. The capitalist system is crumbling and a new, communist society is coming to take its place. The socialist system has already struck root in a considerable part of the world. Imperialism's colonial

system has disintegrated, and, in fierce struggle with colonialism, one nation after another is gaining independence.

We are witnessing a tremendous revolution in science and technology. Man has penetrated the depths of the atom and harnessed its mighty powers. The bounds of outer space are receding in the face of omnipotent human reason.

In reflecting the development of the material world, the consciousness of people, their ideas, theories and views change as well.

Constant development, the passage of objects and phenomena from one state into another, their supersession, thus represent a primary distinctive feature of the material world. Hence, to gain knowledge of objects and phenomena, it is necessary first of all to study their constant change and development. To really know an object we must examine it in its development, "self-movement", change.

*Study of the general picture of the world's development* is an important task of materialist dialectics. Dialectics, Engels wrote, is "the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought".*

How does Marxist dialectics understand the process of development as such? It regards development as movement from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex, as a leap-like, revolutionary process. Moreover, this movement proceeds not along a closed circuit, but along a spiral, each spire being deeper, richer and more diverse than the preceding one. Dialectics sees the sources of development in intrinsic contradictions of objects and phenomena. Only Marxist dialectics furnishes the correct, truly scientific understanding of the process of development.

The basic laws of materialist dialectics give a general picture of the development of the world, its cognition and transformation. The *law of the unity and struggle of opposites* reveals the sources, the driving forces of development. The *law of the passage of quantitative into qualitative changes* indicates the leap-like, revolutionary change of the world, the continuous transformation of intrinsic quantitative changes of objects into fundamental, qualitative changes. The

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* Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1959, p. 194.

*law of the negation of the negation* characterises the progressive, spiral-like character of development. All these laws will be examined in their respective chapters.

### *Invincibility of the New*

The development of the material world is a never-ending process of the old dying and the *new* coming into being. The history of the Earth's crust, for example, is the history of the formation of ever new geological structures. In the vegetable and animal kingdoms old organic forms give way to new and improved ones. Just as in living organisms the cells are constantly being regenerated—old ones die and new ones arise—so in society too the obsolete forms of social structure die and new, progressive ones are born.

The advanced, the new is thus constantly coming to the fore to succeed the old. Nothing can prevent this process. The *invincibility of the new* is the prime feature in the development of nature, society and thought.

Marxist dialectics, however, does not regard every new phenomenon or everything that claims to be new, as truly new. The German fascists, for example, claimed that the brutal regime they established in Europe during the Second World War was a "new order" and they tried to cover up their crimes with the false flag of "national socialism". But this "new" was reactionary, unviable, it did not withstand the test of time and crumbled under the powerful blows of the freedom-loving peoples.

*The new is that which is progressive, improved and viable, which constantly grows and develops.* At first the new is usually quite weak and at times hardly noticeable, while the old prevails and seems invincible. Eventually, however, the old deteriorates, becomes obsolete, while the new grows, constantly develops and triumphs in bitter struggle with the old. At the end of the 19th century the first shoots of the labour movement appeared in Russia. Its forces seemed weak in comparison with the forces of the autocracy and the bourgeoisie. But as time went on the Russian proletariat, being the progressive class of society, grew and gained in strength, matured in the class battles and ultimately defeated tsarism and the bourgeoisie.

Why is the new invincible?

The new is invincible above all because it *stems from the very course of development of reality* and best of all corresponds to the objective conditions. Long ago, for example, plants with seeds that had no protective shell (so-called gymnospermous plants) predominated on Earth. Then new plants appeared, better adapted to the environment. Their seeds were reliably protected from the vagaries of the weather and this made them greatly superior to the other species. As a result these plants ousted the older species, rapidly spread over the Earth and changed the entire appearance of the Earth's vegetation.

The invincibility of the new is particularly apparent in social development. The new in society triumphs because it *corresponds to the requirements of economic life*, of material production. The socialist system is gaining the upper hand over capitalism because it provides scope for the development of the productive forces and eliminates capitalist private property, the big barrier in their way.

The new *meets the interests of the advanced, progressive classes* of society and that is why they fight vigorously for its victory. Active participation of the people in the struggle for the new social system ensured the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and is the prime condition for the Soviet people's successes in communist construction.

The new in social development is also invincible because its *social basis is constantly growing, expanding*. The new, as it emerges, rallies round itself the most progressive forces of society. The Soviet Union is the centre which attracts the progressive forces of our age and it enjoys the support and respect of progressive people the world over. Mutual friendship and co-operation of the socialist countries, support of the working class and all progressive forces of the world are important factors making the great cause of communism invincible.

The invincibility of the new does not mean that its victory comes of itself, automatically. This victory must be prepared, must be doggedly fought for. The *conscious activity* of the people, the advanced classes, the progressive parties plays the decisive part in the victory of the new over the old in social life.

## 2. Dialectics — Doctrine of Universal Connection

The material world is not only a developing, but also a *connected*, *integral whole*. All its objects and phenomena develop not of themselves, not in isolation, but in inseverable connection or unity with other objects and phenomena. Each of them acts on other objects and phenomena and itself is subjected to reciprocal influence.

Science provides voluminous data proving the interconnection and interconditioning of phenomena and objects. Some elementary particles, for example, interacting with each other, form atoms. But atoms too are not isolated; entering into connections, they form molecules and the latter, in turn, form macroscopic bodies. The interaction of macro-bodies is proved by the law of gravitation. According to this law, the Earth is connected with the Sun and other planets of the solar system and the latter is connected with still larger cosmic formations.

Living organisms are bound by an intricate chain of interaction: separate plants and also animals form species, species are united in genera, classes, etc. Organisms are connected not only among themselves, but also with the environment from which they get their necessary nutrition and energy.

The Russian scientist Kliment Timiryazev (1843-1920) discovered the connection of plants with the life-giving energy of the Sun. He showed that under the influence of solar energy carbon dioxide is decomposed in the chlorophyll of the green leaves of plants. The carbon is assimilated by the plant, while the oxygen, indispensable to man's respiration, is released into the air. The resultant organic substances accumulate solar energy in the form of chemical energy, which is then utilised by man when he consumes plants either as food or fuel. "The green leaf, or more exactly, the microscopic green granule of chlorophyll," Timiryazev wrote, "is the focus, the point in world space to which solar energy flows at one end, while all manifestations of life on Earth take their source at the other end. The plant is the connecting link between heaven and Earth. It is truly the Prometheus who stole fire from heaven. The stolen sun ray shines both in the twinkle of a splinter and in the dazzling spark of electricity. The sun ray is the source of energy for the monstrous

fly-wheel of a gigantic steam engine, the artist's brush and the poet's pen."

Man is connected with nature through material production. This connection is effected through labour, an indispensable condition of man's existence. Thanks to labour man wins from nature his means of subsistence. In the process of labour the economic, production relations of people take shape and give rise to other connections—political, legal and moral.

Thus, *universal connection and interconditioning* of objects and phenomena comprise an essential distinctive feature of the material world. To gain real knowledge of an object it is therefore necessary to study all its aspects and connections. *Study of the world as an integral connected whole, examination of the universal connections of things* is an important task of materialist dialectics.

Since objects and phenomena of the material world are diverse, their interconnection, interaction are also diverse. Marxist dialectics studies not all, but only *the most general* connections, i.e., those which exist in all spheres of the material and spiritual world.

The laws and categories of materialist dialectics are a reflection of these connections in man's consciousness.

Knowledge of connections is of tremendous importance because, by revealing them, people discover the *laws* of the objective world. Knowledge of these laws is an indispensable requisite for the practical activity of people. It is the task of science to unravel these laws and equip man with them. Let us give a more detailed explanation of laws.

### *Concept of Law*

Very many laws operate in the objective world. There are laws of inorganic nature and the organic world, of society and thought. But laws in any sphere of reality have certain features in common which are covered by the *philosophical concept of law*. What are these features?

To begin with, a law is a relation or connection between objects or sides of these objects. A law, however, is not any connection, but only a *stable, recurrent connection*, inherent not in one object or a small group of objects, but in a vast

mass of objects and phenomena. For example, the law of interconnection of mass and energy that we mentioned earlier, characterises the mutual dependence of mass and energy of a countless number of physical bodies. The periodic law, discovered by Dmitri Mendeleyev (1834-1907), indicates the dependence of the properties of all chemical elements on the magnitude of the positive charge of the nucleus. A law, thus, is not a single, but a *general* connection between phenomena. A law, Engels wrote, is a "form of universality in nature".

Another important feature of a law is that it represents not all recurrent connections, but only those which are of a *necessary* and *essential* character. The same law of the interconnection of mass and energy characterises the relationship of such essential, inalienable properties of physical bodies as their mass and energy. The biological law of the interconnection of an organism and the environment indicates the necessary, important connection of the organism with the conditions of its existence.

A law, being necessary, essential in phenomena, operates only if there are the appropriate conditions which bring about, not any, but a *definite* basic course of events. Strict definiteness in the operation of laws is of great practical importance: knowing the laws and direction of development, people gain the possibility of foreseeing the future. On understanding, for example, the laws of social development and the conditions in which they operate, people become capable of foreseeing the course of historical events.

Thus, a *law is an essential and necessary, general and recurrent connection among phenomena of the material world*, which brings about a definite course of events.

A struggle over the question of the character of laws has been in progress between materialism and idealism for a long time now. Idealists hold that either man or a mythical "absolute idea", "a universal spirit" is the maker of laws. In the final analysis this standpoint leads to recognition of the divine origin of laws. The contemporary American philosopher Brightman asserts that "every law of nature is a law of God, every energy of nature is a deed of God".

In contrast to idealism, dialectical materialism proceeds from recognition of the *objective character* of laws. This

means that man is unable to make or change laws at will, he can only cognise, reflect them. The world is matter moving in conformity to law, Lenin wrote, and our consciousness, being the highest product of nature, is in a position only to *reflect* this conformity to law.

The objectivity of laws also implies that they operate independently of the will and desires of man and therefore any attempt to act contrary to laws is foredoomed. For example, it is impossible to ignore the law of gravitation and to go into outer space without overcoming the Earth's gravity. Nor is it possible to ignore the laws of social development. This, for example, is attested to by the futility of the desperate attempts made by the imperialists to halt the inexorable disintegration of the colonial system.

Dialectical materialism, attacking the idealist conception of laws, also rejects *fatalism*, i.e., blind worship of laws, disbelief in the power of human reason and the ability of people to cognise laws and make use of them. Man cannot abolish or create laws, but he is able to cognise them and utilise them in his practical activity. Knowledge of nature's laws enables man not only to control the destructive action of water, wind and other natural elements, but also to make them serve his needs: to irrigate the fields, rotate turbines of electric power plants, etc. Drawing on the laws of social development, people transform social life.

The most favourable conditions for the knowledge and application of laws are provided by the socialist system where the action of the laws governing social development coincides with the interests of all the people, where the dominance of socialist property enables society to use the natural resources in a planned way and purposively to improve social relations. Let us take, for example, the law of planned, proportionate development of the economy under socialism. Knowledge and application of this law are necessary, inasmush as socialist production cannot be developed without a plan. At the same time this law fully corresponds to the interests of the working people, because socialist production is developed for the purpose of satisfying ever more fully their constantly growing material and cultural requirements. That is why the working people are interested in cognising this law and placing it at their service.

*CHAPTER VII*

# BASIC LAWS OF MATERIALIST DIALECTICS

Marxist dialectics, as we already know, is the doctrine of the development and universal connection. The main thing in development is the question of its *sources*, *its driving forces*. Since the answer to this question is furnished by the law of the unity and struggle of opposites, we shall begin with this law in our exposition of the basic laws of materialist dialectics.

## THE LAW OF THE UNITY AND STRUGGLE OF OPPOSITES

Lenin called the law of the unity and struggle of opposites the *essence*, *the core* of dialectics. This law reveals the sources, the real causes of the eternal motion and development of the material world. Knowledge of this law is of great importance for understanding the dialectics of development of nature, society and thought, for science and revolutionary activity.

An analysis of the contradictions in objective reality and disclosure of their nature are a major requisite for any scientific study and practical action.

### 1. The Unity and Struggle of Opposites

Before discussing the law of the unity and struggle of opposites as such, let us see how Marxist-Leninist dialectics understands "oppositeness", the "unity" of opposites,

## The Unity of Opposites

All of us have used an ordinary magnet at one time or another and we know that its main feature is that it has a *north* and *south* pole which are mutually exclusive and at the same time interconnected. However much we try to separate the north pole of a magnet from the south pole, we shall not succeed. A magnet cut in half, divided into four, eight or more parts still possesses the same two poles.

*Opposites* are, then, the internal sides, tendencies, forces of an object, which are mutually exclusive but at the same time presuppose each other. The inseverable interconnection of these sides makes up the *unity of opposites*.

All objects and phenomena have contradictory sides which are organically connected, make up the indissoluble unity of opposites. Elementary particles, for example, are a contradictory unity of wave and corpuscular properties. Not only elementary particles, but also the atoms they form are contradictory. In the centre of the atom there is the positively charged nucleus surrounded by one or several negatively charged electrons. The chemical process is a contradictory unity of association and dissociation of atoms.

There are opposites in living organisms as well. Recall the opposite processes of assimilation and dissimilation which constitute the process of metabolism inherent in living matter. In addition, organisms also have such intrinsic contradictory properties as heredity and adaptability. Heredity is the tendency of the organism to preserve hereditarily acquired characteristics; adaptability, on the other hand, is the ability to develop new characteristics corresponding to the changed conditions.

Man's mental activity is marked by the opposite processes of excitation and inhibition, concentration and irradiation of excitation in the cortex of the cerebral hemispheres.

Antagonistic class societies have opposite classes—the slaves and slave-owners in slave society; the serfs and feudal lords under feudalism, the proletariat and bourgeoisie under capitalism.

Contradictory sides are also inherent in the process of knowledge. Man employs such opposite and interconnected

methods of study as induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, etc.

Contradictoriness of objects and phenomena of the world is thus of a *general, universal nature.* There is no object or phenomenon in the world which could not be divided into opposites.

Opposites are not only mutually exclusive, but also necessarily *presuppose* each other. They coexist in one object or phenomenon and are inconceivable one without the other. We have already mentioned the unity of the opposite poles of a magnet. Similarly inseparable are assimilation and dissimilation in living organisms, analysis and synthesis in the process of knowledge. Capitalist society is impossible without opposite classes—the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. As a result of the socialist revolution the proletariat abolishes the bourgeoisie as a class, but then capitalism ceases to be capitalism and gives way to socialism. As long as capitalism lasts, however, the worker cannot exist unless he hires himself out to the capitalist, and the capitalist always exploits the worker.

"And it is just as impossible to have one side of contradiction without the other," Engels wrote, "as it is to retain the whole of an apple in one's hand after half has been eaten."*

### *The Struggle of Opposites Is the Source of Development*

And so, objects and phenomena are a unity of opposites. What is the *character* of this unity? Do opposites peacefully coexist in this unity or do they enter into contradiction, into struggle with each other?

The development of the most diverse objects and phenomena shows that opposite sides cannot exist peacefully side by side in one object: the contradictory, mutually exclusive character of opposites necessarily causes a *struggle* between them. The old and the new, the emergent and the obsolete must come into contradiction, must clash. *It is contradiction, the struggle of opposites that comprises the main source of development of matter and consciousness.* "Develop-

* Marx and Engels, *Selected Works,* Vol. II, p. 226.

ment is the 'struggle' of opposites," wrote Lenin.* He stressed that this struggle is absolute, just as development or motion is absolute.

The statement that the struggle of opposites is decisive in development in no way belittles the importance of their unity. The unity of opposites is a *necessary condition* of struggle, because it takes place only where opposite sides exist in one object or phenomenon.

Lenin pointed out that a state of temporary equilibrium too could exist between opposites; this means that, at a certain stage in the development of the process, neither side predominates. This, for example, was the case in Russia in October 1905 when tsarism was *already* unable to win, but the revolution did not *yet* possess adequate forces for victory. A definite balance of forces between the bourgeoisie and the landlords, on the one hand, and the workers and peasants, on the other, also existed in Russia between February and June 1917. In both cases, however, the balance of opposite forces was temporary. In 1905 the reactionary forces won, while in 1917 it was the revolutionary proletariat and its allies who were victorious.

In any process the equilibrium of opposites is relative because, if it were constant, eternal, there would be no development in the world at all. Only struggle is the source, the driving force of development.

Many modern bourgeois philosophers distort the revolutionary essence of the core of Marxist dialectics by regarding the equilibrium of opposites as absolute and by denying the struggle of opposites. They see the main thing not in the struggle of opposites, but in their reconciliation, their equilibrium. Bourgeois ideologists thereby try to reconcile the interests of the capitalists with the interests of the proletariat and to divert the people from resolving the deepest contradictions of capitalism by revolution.

In reality it is impossible, however, to reconcile class contradictions; this is convincingly shown by the entire history of mankind, and by the revolutionary struggle of the working class.

The history of science and of society proves that the

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 360.

struggle of opposites is the source of development. At the same time we must bear in mind that this struggle is manifested in different ways in different spheres of material world.

The struggle (interaction) of such opposite forces as attraction and repulsion is prevalent in inorganic nature. The interaction of mechanical, electrical and nuclear forces of attraction and repulsion plays a very great part in the rise and existence of atomic nuclei, atoms and molecules. The struggle of these forces, as modern cosmogonic theories show, was the most important source in the birth of the solar system.

Modern astronomy has also demonstrated that the interaction of forces of attraction and repulsion is one of the important sources of the diverse processes taking place in outer space. No absolute balance of these forces exists in the various areas of the Universe; one force always prevails over the other. Where repulsion predominates, matter and energy are dispersed and stars are dying out. Where attraction predominates, matter and energy are concentrated and as a result new stars flare up. Matter and energy thus move eternally in the Cosmos in the course of the struggle, interaction of these opposite forces.

We have pointed out earlier that opposite processes of assimilation and dissimilation are inherent in living organisms. It is their struggle, interaction that constitutes the specific source of development of everything living. These opposite processes cannot be in a state of absolute equilibrium; one of them must prevail. In a young organism assimilation gains ascendancy over dissimilation and determines its growth, development. When dissimilation prevails the organism grows old and deteriorates. In all organisms, however, young and old, these processes interact. It is their interaction, contradiction that makes up life. When this contradiction ends, life ceases.

Social development also proceeds on the basis of the unity and struggle of opposites. Contradictions in material production, especially between productive forces and relations of production, are particularly important in the contradictions of social development. In antagonistic class societies the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production is expressed in the struggle of hostile

classes, which leads to social revolution, replacement of the old social system by the new.

*And so, objects and phenomena have opposite sides, they represent the unity of opposites. Opposites not merely exist side by side, but are in a state of constant contradiction, struggle between themselves. The struggle of opposites is the inner content, the source of development of reality.*

Such is the essence of the dialectical law of the unity and struggle of opposites.

## 2. Diversity of Contradictions

A multitude of the most diverse contradictions exists in the world. We come up against them all the time in our daily life. Marxist dialectics, as distinct from the various sciences, studies the most general contradictions. We shall examine internal and external, antagonistic and non-antagonistic, basic and non-basic contradictions, these being large and important groups of contradictions.

### *Internal and External Contradictions*

Marxist dialectics first of all differentiates between internal and external contradictions.

The interaction, the struggle of opposite sides of a *given* object make up its *internal contradictions.* The contradictory relations of a given object *to its environment*, to the objects of this environment are its *external contradictions.*

The opponents of Marxist dialectics distort the role of different groups of contradictions in development. They deny the decisive significance of internal contradictions and regard external contradictions as the sole source of development. From their viewpoint, for example, the source of development of class society is not the struggle of opposite classes, but the contradiction between society and nature. They do not want to understand that the relation of man to nature as such, and the degree of his domination over it, depend on class relations in society, on the character of the social system.

Both internal and external contradictions are inherent in objects and phenomena of the material world, but internal contradictions, contradictions within the object itself, are the principal, decisive ones in development. It is these contradictions that are the main source of development. Thus Marxist dialectics regards motion as self-motion of matter, as *internal motion*, whose driving forces or impulses are contained within the developing objects and phenomena *themselves*.

The interaction, the struggle of wave and corpuscular properties of matter, the forces of attraction and repulsion, assimilation and dissimilation and other opposites, which we mentioned earlier as the sources of development in various spheres of reality, are not introduced into objects and phenomena from outside, but are inherent in them.

Internal contradictions are the source of development because they determine the aspect or character of the object itself. If it were not for its internal contradictions the object would not be what it is. An atom, for example, could not exist without the interaction, the "struggle" of the positively charged nucleus and negatively charged electrons; an organism could not exist without assimilation and dissimilation, and so on.

All outside influences exerted on an object are always refracted through its intrinsic contradictions, and this is also a manifestation of their determining role in development. Changes in the external environment merely give an impulse to the development of organisms. But in what direction and to what ends development leads ultimately depends on the organism's metabolism, i.e., on the interaction of assimilation and dissimilation characteristic of this organism.

The source of social development is also contained within society itself, in its intrinsic internal contradictions. But the direction in which a country develops and what social system it has depend on how its internal, class contradictions are resolved. "The (socialist.—*V.A.*) revolution is not made to order," as is pointed out in the Programme of the C.P.S.U. "It cannot be imposed on the people from without. It results from the profound internal and international contradictions of capitalism."

It is true that there have been instances when the internal system was imposed on a country by external reactionary forces. But regimes foisted on a people from outside are not stable and collapse at the first serious trial.

Although materialist dialectics emphasises the decisive role of internal contradictions, it does not deny the significance of external cotradictions in development. Their role is diverse and they are very often a necessary requisite for development. Such, for example, is the contradiction between society and nature from which man has to win his means of livelihood.

External contradictions can facilitate development or impede it, lend it different shades or forms, but usually are unable to shape the main course of a process or of development as a whole. The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, for example, was ensured by correctly resolving the internal contradictions, above all the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. But the advance to socialism was also affected by the external contradictions between the Soviet state and the capitalist countries, who did everything in their power to restore the capitalist system in the U.S.S.R. Political boycott and economic blockade, armed intervention, repeated military provocations and, lastly, the invasion of the Nazis greatly impeded the Soviet Union's development, but all these intrigues of imperialism could not halt the victorious advance of socialism.

Since internal contradictions determine the development of all objects and phenomena, in practical activity it is especially necessary to be able to reveal to light and resolve these contradictions. At the same time it is important not to neglect the external contradictions either, because they too are important in development.

Success cannot be achieved unless the interaction of internal and external contradictions is taken into account.

### *Antagonistic and Non-Antagonistic Contradictions*

When we speak of antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions we have in mind above all the sphere of social phenomena. It is true that there are antagonisms of a certain kind in living organisms—between certain types of

bacteria, predatory and non-predatory animals and between some plants—but they must not be confused with social antagonisms.

*Antagonistic contradictions* are above all contradictions between classes, whose interests are irreconcilably hostile. These are the most acute and obvious contradictions caused by the profoundly opposite conditions of life, by the aims and purposes of different classes. The principal characteristic of these contradictions is that they cannot be resolved within the framework of the social system of which they are typical. As they grow deeper and more acute, these antagonistic contradictions lead to bitter clashes, to conflicts. A social revolution is the only means for resolving them.

The contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is the most acute and profound contradiction in capitalist society. The antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is a result of their objective positions in society. The bourgeoisie possesses all the means of production and by virtue of this appropriates the lion's share of the material wealth produced by society. It dominates politically and enjoys everything that culture can give. The proletariat possesses no means of production and hence is compelled to work for the bourgeoisie, thus producing all the material wealth but receiving only a negligible part of it.

The interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are diametrically opposed: the bourgeoisie seeks to perpetuate its rule, while the proletariat wants to emancipate itself from exploitation. As a result, a bitter class struggle goes on between them, which inevitably ends in the socialist revolution. The class struggle and the socialist revolution are thus a special form of resolving capitalism's antagonistic contradictions.

Bourgeois ideologists and revisionists deny the existence of class antagonisms in contemporary capitalist society. In reality, however, these antagonistic contradictions of capitalism, far from vanishing, are constantly growing more acute. They will remain as long as capitalism exists and will only disappear with the victory of socialism.

*Non-antagonistic contradictions* are contradictions between classes and between social groups, whose fundamental interests coincide. These contradictions are gradually elim-

inated and are not resolved through a social revolution. Such, for example, are the contradictions between the working class and the peasants. Under capitalism the town exploits the country and to a certain degree the peasant extends his animosity for the town to the worker. The peasant owns property (land, a horse, implements, etc.) and is interested in keeping it. The worker, on the other hand, owns no property. The interests of the workers and peasants also clash in the market where the peasant tries to sell the products of his labour at the highest price possible. All this taken together makes for certain contradictions between the working class and the peasants under capitalism.

The interests of the workers and the peasants are contradictory in particular things, but in the fundamental thing they fully coincide: they are both exploited. That is why they strive to put an end to exploitation and on this fundamental question their interests are identical. This community of fundamental interests creates an objective basis for the alliance of the working class and the peasants in the struggle against the capitalist system.

The Russian Communist Party took into account the community of the vital interests of the workers and peasants and united them in a mighty social force which defeated capitalism. Subsequently, in the course of building socialism, the contradictions between the working class and the peasants, inherited from capitalism, were eliminated and their unity in the common effort to build socialism and communism is becoming ever stronger and more invincible.

The contradictions of socialist society too are of a non-antagonistic nature; this will be explained later in greater detail.

### *Basic and Non-Basic Contradictions*

Objects and phenomena, from the simplest to the most complex, contain not one but several contradictions simultaneously. To find our way in this multitude of contradictions we must single out from among them the basic, cardinal contradiction. The basic contradiction is that which plays the decisive, leading part in development and affects all other contradictions.

The basic, decisive contradiction of the chemical process, for example, is the contradiction between association and dissociation of atoms; of the biological process, the contradictory nature of metabolism, etc.

What is particularly important is to find the basic contradiction of social life which is exceptionally complex and many-sided. The discovery of this basic contradiction helps the advanced classes of society and the Marxist parties to elaborate the correct line of action and efficiently organise practical work.

A mass of contradictions is present in contemporary society. In any capitalist country there is the antagonism between the social character of the production process and the private form of appropriation, between labour and capital, etc. There are contradictions between capitalist countries, between their groupings, blocs, and so on.

Which is the basic, decisive contradiction in this multitude of contradictions in contemporary society?

The contradiction between the *forces of socialism*, as represented by the world socialist system, on the one hand, and the *reactionary forces of imperialism*, on the other, is the basic, decisive contradiction of contemporary society as a whole. This contradiction has become the motive force of mankind's development at the present time. It embodies two lines, two historical tendencies. One, represented by the world socialist system, is the line of progress, peace and constructive endeavour. The other, represented by imperialism, is the line of reaction, oppression and wars.

The contradiction between socialism and imperialism is exerting a tremendous impact on the entire course of world history. It influences the struggle of classes in the capitalist countries themselves, the struggle of the people in the colonies and dependent countries against their oppressors, the contradictions between the capitalist countries themselves. The existence of the world socialist system is a great stumbling block to the imperialists and prevents them from unleashing another world war, and from trampling upon the sovereign rights of other nations with impunity; it fires the hearts of working people in capitalist countries with confidence in the justice of their cause and lends them

strength in their struggle against the exploiters. As the socialist system develops economically, politically and culturally, its influence in the world grows. That is why Marxist parties organise their practical work with account for the operation of this paramount contradiction of our age—the constant growth in the might of the socialist forces and the weakening of the imperialist forces.

The basic contradiction of the present epoch, the contradiction between socialism and imperialism, does not remove the deep contradictions within the capitalist world. "...*The world imperialist system is rent by deep-rooted and acute contradictions*," as is emphasised in the Programme of the C.P.S.U. "The antagonism of labour and capital, the contradictions between the people and the monopolies, growing militarism, the break-up of the colonial system, the contradictions between the imperialist countries, conflicts and contradictions between the young national states and the old colonial powers, and—most important of all—the rapid growth of world socialism, are sapping and destroying imperialism, leading to its weakening and collapse."

There are no hard and fast boundaries between internal and external, antagonistic and non-antagonistic, basic and non-basic contradictions. In reality they are intertwined, pass into one another and play a different part in development. That is why each contradiction should be approached separately, taking into account the conditions in which it manifests itself and the role it plays.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union approaches the contradictions of social development concretely, takes into account historical conditions, singles out the chief contradictions and employs the main forces and resources to resolve them. In the first years of Soviet power the contradiction between the advanced political system established in the country and the backward economy inherited from tsarist Russia made itself felt very strongly. This contradiction was resolved in the process of industrialisation, but as industrialisation made headway, the contradiction between socialist industry and small-scale peasant farming became more and more acute. This contradiction too was resolved by the efforts of the people and the Party through

the organisation of the peasants in collective farms. The elimination of these contradictions was of decisive significance in building socialism in the Soviet Union.

### 3. Contradictions of Socialist Society and Ways of Eliminating Them

The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union resulted in the abolition of the exploiting classes and of the causes that give rise to the exploitation of man by man, in the elimination of the antithesis between town and country, between manual and mental labour. Community of fundamental interests of the workers, peasants and the intelligentsia formed the basis for the socio-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people. Friendship among the many Soviet peoples struck firm root and grew stronger. As the U.S.S.R. advances to communism this unity is further strengthened, the nations and social groups draw closer together, they enrich each other and the distinctions between them gradually disappear. This, however, does not mean that there are no contradictions under socialism. Socialist society develops continuously and where there is development there always exists the old and the new and, consequently, struggle between them. "Antagonism and contradiction," Lenin wrote, "are not one and the same thing. Under socialism the first will vanish, the second will remain."*

Lenin pointed not only to the existence of contradictions under socialism, but also revealed their major distinction, their *non-antagonistic character*. This is because there are no hostile classes and exploitation in socialist society; the existence of social property unites the people. Nikita Khrushchov has said that contradictions of socialist society are contradictions and difficulties of growth connected with the rapid advance of the socialist economy, the rise in the material and cultural requirements of the people. These are contradictions between the new and the old, the progressive and the backward.

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* *Lenin Miscellany XI*, Russ. ed., Moscow, 1931, p. 357.

Contradictions of socialist society are eliminated by the common effort of all the working people led by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. The correct, scientifically substantiated policy of the Party, the unity of the Party and the people, the full support given by the people to steps taken by the Party and the Government ensure the timely disclosure and elimination of all contradictions. That is why contradictions of socialism do not turn into conflicts, do not assume the character of social upheavals. Under capitalism the resolving of contradictions leads to its doom, while the elimination of socialism's contradictions actually strengthens the socialist system and facilitates the advance of a country to communism.

Under socialism there are certain contradictions inherent in social production, in particular, contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production. This will be examined in greater detail in Chapter XII dealing with the socialist mode of production.

As socialist society develops contradictions between the constantly growing national economy and obsolescent forms and methods of economic management arise and are resolved. Some of these forms and methods originally played a positive part in society's development, but in new conditions they no longer correspond to life's requirements and may become a brake on progress. Hence the need to replace obsolete methods by new, more improved and efficient ones. For example, in 1957 the Communist Party and the Soviet Government decided to reorganise the management of industry and construction: the system of centralised ministries was in the main replaced by economic councils formed in economic administration areas. This resolved the contradiction between the existing level of industry and construction and the new sweeping tasks confronting them, on the one hand, and the obsolescent form of their management, on the other. Reorganisation gave a powerful stimulus to further economic development.

The vast majority of the Soviet people actively participate in building communism, but there are individuals who still cling to the old, obsolete methods of production, to backward technology, etc. There are also those, whose minds are infected with survivals of capitalism. The interests and

actions of these individuals run counter to the interests of the majority of the population; they hinder the building of communism. Most of these individuals are re-educated by the efforts of the people and the Communist Party, while measures of coercion are employed against the more incorrigible ones.

It should be stressed that contradictions between Soviet people and individuals who carry survivals of the old do not stem from the nature of socialist society but from the legacy and influence of capitalism, from shortcomings in ideological work, education, etc. These contradictions are temporary and will be fully eliminated with the victory of communism.

How are the contradictions of socialism brought to light and resolved?

The method of disclosing the contradictions of socialist society lies in criticism and self-criticism. But, having brought to light contradictions, the method of criticism and self-criticism by itself is unable to resolve them. To eliminate them the work of everyone, the competent organisational and educational work both of the Party and of the state are required. Constant development and improvement of production, active participation of the people in communist construction, the painstaking and multifarious work of the Party in educating the Soviet citizen—such are the main means of eliminating contradictions of socialist society.

Besides internal contradictions, the Soviet Union and the entire world socialist system are in antagonistic contradiction with the world capitalist system. Although this contradiction is external, it exercises considerable influence on the development of the socialist countries and it must not be underestimated. The socialist countries are doing all they can to resolve this contradiction in a peaceful way, on the basis of peaceful coexistence. World thermonuclear war would result in colossal loss of human life and destruction and would greatly retard mankind's progress. That is why the struggle to prevent another world war and to preserve peace is the overriding duty of all honest people. Struggle for peace is an essential requisite of social progress and of the successful building of socialism and communism.

## THE LAW OF THE PASSAGE OF QUANTITATIVE INTO QUALITATIVE CHANGES

The law of the passage of quantitative into qualitative changes shows *how*, in *what way* development proceeds and what is the *mechanism* of this process.

To understand the essence of this law we should first of all understand quality and quantity.

### 1. Quality and Quantity

We are surrounded by very many of the most diverse objects and phenomena and all of them are in a state of constant motion or change. We nevertheless do not confuse these objects, but differentiate between them and define them. They do not merge into some kind of grey mass; each one differs from the others by certain specific properties of its own.

Let us take, for example, such a metal as gold. It has a characteristic yellow colour, ductility and malleability, a definite density and heat capacity, melting and boiling points. Gold dissolves neither in alkali nor in many acids; it is not very active chemically and does not rust. All this taken together sets gold apart from other metals.

All that which makes an object what it is, what distinguishes it from innumerable other objects, is its *quality*.

All objects and phenomena possess quality. It is this that enables us to define and distinguish them. What, for example, sets living matter apart from non-living matter? The ability to enter into metabolic interchange with the environment, purposively to respond to external influences, to propagate. These and certain other properties make up the quality of living matter.

Social phenomena too differ qualitatively. The dominance of commodity production, the existence of capitalist property, wage labour and other features distinguish capitalism from feudalism.

Quality is manifested in properties. A *property* characterises a thing from one side only, whereas quality gives the general idea of an object as a whole. Yellow colour,

malleability, ductility and other features of gold taken separately are its properties, while all these properties taken together constitute its quality.

Besides a definite quality each object also possesses *quantity*. As distinct from quality, quantity reflects the *degree* of development or *intensity* of an object's intrinsic properties and also its size, volume, etc. Quantity is usually expressed by a *number*. Size, weight, volume of objects, the intensity of their intrinsic colours, of the sounds they emit, etc., are expressed numerically.

Social phenomena also have quantitative characteristics. Each socio-economic system has a corresponding level or degree of development of production. Any country possesses a definite productive capacity, labour, raw material and power resources.

Quantity and quality are a *unity* inasmuch as they represent the two sides of one and the same object. But there are also important distinctions between them. A change in quality leads to a change of the object, to its conversion into another object; on the other hand, a change in quantity within certain limits does not bring about a noticeable transformation of the object. If capitalist property, i.e., the most important qualitative feature of capitalism, is abolished and socialist property is substituted for it, a new, qualitatively different system, socialism, will supersede capitalism. But if capitalist property is enlarged, centralised, concentrated in the hands of a small group of monopolists or of the bourgeois state, as is the case in the capitalist world today, capitalism will not cease to be capitalism.

The unity of quantity and quality is called *measure*. Measure is a kind of boundary, a framework within which the object remains what it is. A "disturbance" of this measure, of this definite combination of quantitative and qualitative sides, leads to a change in the object, its conversion into another object. For example, the measure for mercury in liquid state is the temperature from —39°C to +357°C. At —39°C mercury solidifies, while at +357°C it begins to boil and becomes vapourised.

Quantitative and qualitative definiteness is inherent in social phenomena as well. The material and technical basis of communism, for example, is marked not only by an

exceptionally big quantitative growth of production, but also by qualitative distinctions: all-round and complete electrification of production, overall mechanisation and automation of production processes, the use of new sources of power, raw and other materials, the organic unity of science and production, etc.

In both theory and practice it is very important to take into account the unity of quantitative and qualitative sides of phenomena.

## 2. The Passage of Quantitative into Qualitative Changes — A Law of Development

We pointed out earlier that a change in quantity within certain limits does not lead to a change in the qualitative state of an object. But as soon as these limits are overstepped and the "measure" is upset, the seemingly inessential quantitative changes inevitably bring about a radical, qualitative transformation: quantity passes into quality. In the process of development, Marx wrote, "... merely quantitative differences beyond a certain point pass into qualitative changes".*

The passage of quantitative into qualitative changes is a *universal law* of development of the material world.

To reveal the universal character of this law let us trace its operation in different spheres of reality.

Modern physics has proved that some elementary particles can be transmuted into other, qualitatively different ones. The process of their transmutation is always connected with a certain quantitative accumulation: it takes place only if the particles possess a certain, sufficiently high level of energy.

The numerous changes of substances from one state to another (from solid to liquid, from liquid to gas, etc.) are also manifestations of the law of the passage of quantitative into qualitative changes. When water, for example, is heated above 100°C it is transformed into a different quality, steam.

* Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1959, p. 309.

The properties of steam are distinct from those of water. Salts and sugar, for example, do not dissolve in steam whereas they do in water.

The law of the passage of quantitative into qualitative changes is strikingly apparent in chemical processes. Mendeleyev's periodic law shows that the quality of chemical elements depends on the quantity of the positive charge of their atomic nucleus. Within certain limits a quantitative change in the charge causes no qualitative changes in the chemical element, but at a definite stage these quantitative changes lead to the formation of a new element. Thus, during radioactive disintegration, as the uranium nucleus loses atomic weight and charge, it is ultimately transmuted into a qualitatively new element, lead. In general, chemistry is the science that studies qualitative transformations of substances resulting from quantitative changes. A molecule of oxygen for example contains two atoms, but as soon as one more atom of oxygen is added it becomes ozone, a qualitatively new chemical substance.

In the organic world too quantitative changes pass into qualitative ones, although here it is more difficult to trace the dependence of the changes in quality on quantitative accumulations. Academician T. D. Lysenko has established that plants in their development pass through two qualitatively distinct stages, vernalisation and light; the passage from one stage into another is determined by changes in the quantity of heat, moisture and light in the environment.

The passage of quantitative into qualitative changes takes place in social development as well. Thus, the transition from capitalism to socialism, effected by the socialist revolution, has definite quantitative prerequisites: growth of the productive forces under capitalism, extension of the social character of production, and an increase in the number of revolutionary workers, etc.

Not only do quantitative changes develop into qualitative changes, but the latter, in turn, lead to an increase in quantity. The radical, qualitative change in the social system, the replacement of capitalism by socialism, entails a substantial change in various quantities: increase in the volume of industrial and agricultural output, more rapid

rates of economic and cultural development, growth of the national income, wages, etc.

Quantitative and qualitative changes are thus interconnected and influence each other.

### *The Unity of Continuity and Discontinuity (Leap) in Development*

Quantitative changes are of a relatively slow, continuous nature, while qualitative transformations are discontinuous, leap-like. Development therefore appears as the unity of two differing but interconnected forms or stages—*continuity and discontinuity* (*leap*).*

*Continuity* in development is the stage of slow, imperceptible *quantitative* accumulation. It does not affect the quality of an object, but introduces in it insignificant quantitative changes; it is a process of increasing or decreasing of what exists.

*Discontinuity*, or *leap*, is a stage of radical, *qualitative* change in an object, a moment or period when the old quality passes into a new one. In contrast to the concealed, slow quantitative changes, a leap is a more or less open, relatively swift change in the *quality* of an object. This change occurs in a relatively rapid manner, even when the qualitative transformations assume the form of a gradual transition.

Leaps in the development of the material world may be: formation of some elementary particles from others, a change in the state of a substance, the birth of a new chemical element, of a previously non-existent species of plant or animal, of a new social system, etc. Each one of them results from definite quantitative accumulation.

Since a leap results in destruction of the old and development of what is new and progressive, leaps are of tremendous importance in development.

Leaps are particularly significant in the development of society, where they often acquire the nature of social revo-

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* Continuity and discontinuity are inherent not only in the development, but also in the *state* of matter. Matter has wave (continuous) and corpuscular (discontinuous) properties.

lutions abolishing the old and establishing a new social system, thereby removing obstacles to social progress.

Since development always appears as a unity of quantitative (continuous) and qualitative (leap-like) changes, in practice and in theory it is necessary to take both these stages of development into account. To ignore any one of them means to distort the process of development, to lapse into metaphysics.

Metaphysicians deny that qualitative changes take place, and they reduce development to imperceptible quantitative accumulation. The theory of *preformation* is an example of such a misunderstanding of development in the field of biology. The proponents of this theory (for example, Robinet whom we mentioned earlier) maintain that the embryo is a fully developed, mature organism, but on a microscopic scale. Development of the organism, from their point of view, is simple growth, an increase in the embryo's size. In reality, however, the embryo undergoes deep qualitative changes in the course of its development.

Bourgeois ideologists and revisionists follow this metaphysical line of thought in seeking to explain social development. They understand social development as pure continuity without leaps or revolutions. By doing so they deny the need for a socialist revolution.

It is similarly wrong to ignore quantitative changes, to reduce development merely to leaps, to a break in continuity, as was done, for example, by the French 19th-century scientist Georges Cuvier. He claimed that some kind of catastrophes occurred on Earth one after another, as a result of which old species of plants and animals were fully replaced by new ones. Moreover, Cuvier denied any connection between the new and the vanished species.

Denial of quantitative changes serves as the theoretical basis of *anarchism*, a petty-bourgeois trend hostile to Marxism. Anarchists scoff at the prolonged, painstaking work carried out by a Marxist party in accumulating its forces, organising the people and gradually preparing them for revolutionary action. Recklessness and conspiratorial activities are typical anarchist tactics which have seriously harmed the labour movement.

Marxist dialectics demands a competent analysis of continuous and leap-like forms of development, particularly of their unity in social development. Since a leap or revolution is decisive in the development of society, the transition from capitalism to socialism can be effected neither through slow, quantitative changes nor through reforms, but only through a qualitative transformation of the capitalist system, through a socialist revolution.

And so, *quantitative and qualitative definiteness, quantity and quality are inherent in all objects and phenomena. Quantity and quality are interconnected*; *in the process of development imperceptible, gradual quantitative changes pass into basic, qualitative changes. This passage takes the form of a leap.*

This is the essence of the dialectical law of the passage of quantitative into qualitative changes.

A leap is a universal, indispensable form by which quantitative changes pass into qualitative changes. Since, however, the most diverse objects and phenomena exist in the world, leaps too are diverse. Let us examine this question in greater detail.

### 3. Diversity of Forms of the Passage from the Old Quality to the New

The basic feature of any leap is a radical turn in development or formation of a new quality. But in different objects this turn, the passage from the old quality to the new, takes place differently in various forms. The form of the leap indicates *how*, *in what way* the transition from the old to the new takes place—swiftly, completely, at once or gradually, partially. Some leaps are *sudden and swift*, with the old quality passing into the new completely and at once.

Other leaps are less rapid and not so sudden. In this case the old quality does not pass into the new at once and completely, but in parts: the elements of the old *gradually* wither away and are replaced by elements of the new quality just as gradually. A leap of this kind, as a gradual *qualitative* change, must not be confused with a gradual *quantitative* accumulation. For all its gradualness this leap too is

a much faster and more noticeable change than the most intensive change of quantity. Moreover, gradual, quantitative changes do not affect the essence of an object, whereas every leap, even a gradual one, always remains a decisive turn in development, it transforms the object and turns it into a qualitatively new object.

On what does the form of a leap depend?

First of all it depends on the *character* of the phenomenon undergoing development. Each phenomenon passes into another, a new one, in its own particular way. For example, the transmutation of certain elementary particles into others takes place through an explosion. As soon as an electron and positron clash at sufficiently high energies, a flash (explosion) occurs instantly, testifying to the transmutation of the original particles into others (photons). The transmutation of certain chemical elements into others during an increase or decrease in the charge of the atomic nuclei is just as instantaneous.

In organic nature leaps as a rule are of a gradual character. The birth of new species takes place in dependence on the external environment. The environment, however, changes slowly, gradually. This largely explains why new species of plants and animals do not arise at once, but in the process of a long development, in the course of which organisms gradually acquire and pass on by heredity new characteristics which conform to the changed environment, and lose the old characteristics which no longer correspond to the new conditions.

Man too, as we know, arose in the course of prolonged evolution. Notwithstanding the gradual character of transformation of anthropoid ape into man, the transformation as such was the greatest leap, turning point, in the development of the animal world. It marked the beginning of human society.

The form of a leap also depends on the *conditions* in which the phenomenon develops. During radioactive disintegration, for example, the nuclei of some chemical elements are transmuted into nuclei of other, lighter elements, and this process is accompanied by the conversion of atomic energy into thermal energy. This conversion, depending on the conditions, may assume the form of an explosion (in an atomic

bomb) or the gradual conversion of atomic energy into heat (in reactors of atomic power plants).

In social development transition from the old quality to the new may take the form of rapid and violent changes or gradual changes.

The October Revolution, the greatest qualitative turning point in history which ushered in a new era in the development of mankind, the era of socialism and communism, was a rapid and violent leap. As a result of this revolution, the Russian workers, through an armed uprising, put an end to the rule of the bourgeoisie by a single blow, and came to power.

The cultural revolution in the Soviet Union is also a leap, a revolutionary transition to a new, socialist culture; it was effected, however, not at once, but gradually, in step with the successes of socialist construction. The culminating stage of this cultural revolution will come in the period of the full-scale construction of communist society.

It is very important to take into account the distinctive features of leaps in practice. Without ascertaining these distinctive features it is impossible to find the correct ways for a transition from the old to the new.

The question of the forms of transition from capitalism to socialism in different countries is particularly important at present. The transition to socialism in any country can be effected only through a socialist revolution. Without a qualitative leap, without a revolution, transition to socialism is impossible. But the concrete ways in which the revolution will proceed in each individual country depend on the level of the country's development, the strength and organisation of the working class and its allies, the traditions and customs of the people, the strength of the bourgeoisie, degree of its resistance, and a number of other internal and external factors.

The experience of building socialism in the Soviet Union and in the other socialist countries shows that the development of the socialist revolution in various countries cannot be the same, and that in future the forms of development will be ever more diverse.

## 4. The Nature of Qualitative Changes During the Transition from Socialism to Communism

Communist society passes through two phases in its development—socialism and communism.

Socialism and communism are two stages of *one and the same* socio-economic formation, stages differing in the degree of economic development and maturity of social relations. They have a common economic foundation in the social ownership of the means of production, and consequently have relations of co-operation and mutual assistance among people and a single communist ideology. The law of planned, proportionate development of the national economy operates both under socialism and under communism. The aim of social production (to fully satisfy the material and cultural requirements of the working people), and the ways for achieving this aim (the constant development and improvement of production on the basis of advanced technology) are also identical under socialism and communism.

At the same time there are also qualitative distinctions between socialism and communism. Communism is the higher and more improved stage of the communist socio-economic formation. Under communism mechanisation and automation will reach an exceptionally high degree. The level of production will be high enough to enable society to change from the socialist principle of distribution: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work", to the qualitatively new, communist principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs". The nature of labour too will be greatly altered. All members of society will develop an inner urge to work for the common good voluntarily and in accordance with their abilities.

With the victory of communism important qualitative changes will take place not only in the economy, but also in social relations, the way of life and consciousness of people. Essential distinctions between town and country will disappear followed by the removal of distinctions between manual and mental labour; all citizens in the country will become members of communist society. Under communism the state will wither away and the socialist state will develop into communist public self-government; the survivals

of capitalism in people's minds will be fully eradicated, and their way of life and habits will change.*

Although communism differs from socialism, it *naturally* and *necessarily* grows out of socialism after the latter has been set on a firm foundation; it develops on the basis of socialism's great achievements in the economy and in the field of culture. Soviet society now has many tangible and visible features of communism. Communist forms of labour and organisation of production are rapidly developing. Public forms of satisfying the material and cultural requirements of the people—public catering, boarding schools, kindergartens and nurseries, etc.—are becoming more widespread. These communist features will continue to develop and improve.

The transition from socialism to communism presupposes the preservation and improvement of the economic and cultural gains of socialism. That is why it is effected not through a social revolution, not in the form of a sudden leap, but gradually, continuously.

The transition to the communist principle of distribution, for example, will be effected not at once, but gradually, in consecutive stages. In the *first stage* (1961-1970), as pointed out in the Programme of the C.P.S.U., the standard of living will increase to the extent that everyone's basic material needs will be satisfied. During the *second stage* (1971-1980) the building of the material and technical basis of communism will provide the entire population with an abundance of the necessities and comforts of life; society will, therefore, draw near to applying the principle of distribution according to needs.

The Programme also indicates the way for the gradual development of the socialist principle of distribution into the communist principle, which calls for a steady increase in the public funds distributed free among members of society in combination with distribution according to work. A considerable part of the material and cultural benefits is already distributed through the public funds, including state expenditure on education, public health, culture,

* For more details about the elimination of social distinctions, the withering away of the state and eradication of survivals of the past from people's minds see Chapters XI, XV and XIX.

sport, etc. In future, as the material and technical basis of communism is built up, this form of distribution will steadily develop and gradually replace the socialist principle of distribution according to work.

Moral stimuli, which are already part and parcel of the labour of a Soviet citizen, will also come to predominate just as gradually. The transfer of the functions of state administration to public organisations and the remoulding of the consciousness and way of life of the builders of communism will not take place at once either.

The transition from socialism to communism is thus a continuous process of improvement and development of socialist social relations, the gradual passing away of old and the birth of new forms of life, their intertwining and interdependence. This gradual transition cannot be speeded up by the premature application of the principles of communism. The new forms of economic development, social organisation and way of life will strike root consecutively, step by step, as the material and spiritual prerequisites mature.

The continuous character of the transition to communism is governed by laws and determined by the very nature of the socialist system. Under socialism there are no social forces opposed to society's advance to communism. The conscious, planned activity of the Party and the Soviet state ensures the timely disclosure and elimination of contradictions arising in the course of this advance. This precludes social upheavals, sudden changes in the life of society; development becomes gradual and continuous.

Gradualness in no way signifies a slow pace of development. On the contrary, the transition to communism is a process of exceptionally rapid economic and cultural progress. In future, as indicated by the new Programme of the C.P.S.U., this process will be accelerated on the basis of the high level of development of the productive forces and by the ever more active participation of millions of people in building communism.

### THE LAW OF THE NEGATION OF THE NEGATION

The law of the negation of the negation reveals the *general direction*, *tendency* of development of the material world.

To understand the essence and significance of this law we must first of all ascertain what is *dialectical negation* and what place it holds in development.

### 1. Dialectical Negation and Its Role in Development

The passing away of the old which has outlived its age and the rise of the new and advanced proceeds constantly in every sphere of reality. It is the replacement of the old by the new, of the dying by the emerging that constitutes development, while the overcoming of the old by the new, arising from the old, is called *negation.*

The term "negation" was introduced in philosophy by Hegel, but he invested it with an idealist meaning. From his point of view, it is the development of the idea, of thought that underlies negation.

Marx and Engels, while preserving the term "negation", interpreted it in a materialist way. They demonstrated that negation is an intergal part of development of reality itself. "No development can take place in any sphere unless it negates its old forms of existence,"* Marx wrote.

The development of the Earth's crust, for example, has passed through a number of geological eras; each new era, arising on the basis of the preceding one, represents a certain negation of the old. In the organic world too each new species of plant or animal, arising on the basis of the old, at the same time represents its negation. The history of society also consists of a chain of negations of the old social order by the new; primitive communism by slave society; slave society by feudalism, feudalism by capitalism; capitalism by socialism. Negation is also inherent in the development of knowledge. Each new, improved scientific theory negates the old, less developed.

Negation is not something introduced into an object or phenomenon from outside, but is the result of the object's or phenomenon's own, internal development. Objects and phenomena are contradictory and develop on the basis of

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* Marx, Engels, "Moralising Critique and Criticising Morality", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, Russ. ed., p. 297.

their internal opposites; they themselves create the conditions for their destruction, for the passage into a new, higher quality. Negation is the overcoming of the old through internal contradictions, a result of self-development, self-movement of objects and phenomena. Thus, socialism comes to take the place of capitalism because it resolves the internal, intrinsic contradictions of the capitalist system.

### *Dialectical and Metaphysical Understanding of Negation*

Dialectics and metaphysics differ in their understanding of the essence of negation. Metaphysics regards negation as the casting aside, the absolute destruction of the old, and thus misinterprets the development of reality. Lenin called such an understanding of negation "empty" and "futile", because it precludes any possibility of further development.

That is how negation was understood by supporters of the petty-bourgeois Proletkult* trend which existed in the early years of Soviet power. They advocated that the culture that had arisen under the bourgeois system should be discarded and that a new, proletarian culture should be created from scratch. Such conception of negation, far from promoting development, did irreparable harm. That is why, in criticising the Proletkult supporters, Lenin pointed to the need for making use of the cultural heritage of the past; he considered that only by critically assimilating this heritage was it possible to create a genuinely proletarian, socialist culture.

Marxist dialectics reveals the true essence of dialectical negation. What is characteristic of Marxist dialectics, Lenin held, is not "empty", "futile" negation, but negation as "a moment of connection, as a moment of development, retaining the positive". In this interpretation of negation dialectics proceeds from the premise that the new does not completely obliterate the old, but retains the best in it; in fact it not only retains it, but assimilates it and raises it to a new, higher level. Thus, when higher organisms negate the lower on whose basis they arose, they preserve the intrinsic

* Abbreviated name of Proletarskaya Kultura, a cultural and educational organisation which existed in the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1932.

cellular structure of the lower, their selective nature of reflection and other features. A new social system, negating the old, preserves its productive forces, achievements of science, technology and culture. The connection of the new and the old likewise exists in knowledge, in science.

Thus, recognition of *succession*, the connection of the new and the old in development, is a feature of the Marxist understanding of negation. But we must bear in mind that the new never takes over the old completely, as it is. It takes from the old only certain elements or sides; moreover, it does not absorb them mechanically, but assimilates them, transforms them to conform with its own nature. Marxist dialectics calls for a critical attitude to the past experience of mankind, points to the need for creative application of this experience; strict account must be taken of the changed conditions and new tasks of revolutionary practice. Marxist philosophy, for example, did not simply accept the progressive ideas of previous philosophies, but critically reworked and enriched them with the new achievements of science and practice, and raised philosophy as a science to a qualitatively new, higher stage.

## 2. The Progressive Nature of Development

### *Development as Progress*

And so, we have shown that as a result of negation one or another contradiction is resolved, the old is destroyed and the new arises. But does this bring development to an end? No, the rise of the new does not stop development. Anything new does not remain new for ever. While developing, it prepares the prerequisites for the rise of something newer, more progressive. And the moment these prerequisites and conditions ripen, negation again occurs. This is the *negation of the negation*, i.e., the negation of that which itself previously overcame the old; this is replacement of the new by something even newer. The result of this second negation is again negated, overcome, and so on *ad infinitum*. Development thus appears as a countless number of successive negations, as the endless replacement or overcoming of the old by the new.

Since each higher stage of development only negates in the lower what has become obsolete, while accepting and augmenting the achievements of preceding stages, development as a whole acquires a *progressive, forward* character. Progress is the general direction of dialectical development.

Progress takes place in all spheres of reality. Let us outline the progressive development on our planet.

We have said that gas-dust matter containing the simplest chemical substances was the primary material from which the planets of the solar system, including the Earth, were formed. In the course of nature's development these substances became more and more complex. As a result living, organic nature arose. Living organisms also developed from the simple to the complex: from pre-cellular forms to the cell, from unicellular to multicellular and then to more complex animals, the evolution of which led to the appearance of anthropoid beings and later, to the appearance of man. With the rise of man the process of social development began. The consecutive stages in the progressive development of society were: the primitive-communal, slave, feudal, capitalist, and socialist systems.

*Constant acceleration of the rate of development* is a primary distinction of the progress of society. The process of man's development began approximately a million years ago. Since the history of contemporary man is limited to tens of thousands of years, we can imagine how slow the process of man's emergence was. Progress in the slave and feudal societies was faster, although it, too, dragged out for millenniums. Capitalism developed much faster than feudalism. With the transition to socialism, the rate of economic and cultural development has been tremendously accelerated. In future, when mankind gets rid of capitalist relations retarding progress and gains the opportunity to concentrate all efforts on harnessing the forces of nature, development will proceed at an unprecedented pace.

### *The Spiral-Like Character of Development*

The progressive character of development is the chief, but not the only feature of the law of the negation of the negation. This law describes development not as movement

along a straight line, but as an extremely involved, *spiral-like* process, with a definite *repetition* of stages already passed, a certain return to the past. "A development that seemingly repeats the stages already passed, but repeats them otherwise, on a higher basis ('negation of negation'), a development, so to speak, in spirals, not in a straight line."*

The spiral-like character of development may be seen in various spheres of reality.

The Mendeleyev Periodic Table is perhaps one of its most striking manifestations in inorganic nature.

In Mendeleyev's periodic system chemical elements are arranged according to the magnitude of the positive charge of their atomic nucleus. They form periods and series in which we observe a certain repetition of properties. Let us take, for example, the second period beginning with lithium. Lithium is an element with certain pronounced metallic properties, it is an alkali metal. As the charge of the nucleus in the elements following lithium grows, the properties characteristic of metals diminish and the non-metallic properties gradually increase. At the end of the period we find a typical metalloid (non-metal) fluorine and the inert gas neon. The next, third period again begins with an alkali metal (sodium) and ends with the non-metallic chlorine and the inert gas argon. The same is repeated in the subsequent periods where the metallic properties are negated by the non-metallic, and then in the following period the latter are again negated by the metallic properties. A seeming return to the old, the negation of the negation, takes place.

This system of elements can be roughly pictured as an ascending, unwinding spiral. A repetition of the properties occurs at increasing intervals (two elements in the first period, eight in the second period, and so on), and it proceeds on a qualitatively different basis at each stage: the elements of each new period have a bigger nuclear charge, a more complex structure, etc.

Development along a spiral occurs in the organic world as well. Engels illustrated the operation of this law by the

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* Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, Moscow, 6th English edition, p. 25.

development of a grain of barley. From a grain, landing in favourable conditions, there grows a stalk; this represents a negation of the grain. Then, an ear with new grains grows on the stalk; the new grains are a negation of the stalk—the negation of the negation. At the same time there is a certain return to the starting point, the grain, but on a new basis. The new grains differ from the original grain not only quantitatively (10-20 instead of 1) but often also for their properties. Here development proceeds in the form of a spiral. At its starting point is one grain, from which several grow, and these in turn give rise to an even larger number, and so on.

Spiral-like development also takes place in social life. The primitive-communal system was the first form of social organisation. It was a classless society based on common ownership of the extremely primitive tools of production. Further development of production led to the negation of this system by the class, slave society. Then slavery gave way to feudalism which in turn was negated by capitalism. In place of capitalism has come socialism, the first phase of communism. This is also a certain negation of the negation, a return to the initial point of development in a certain sense; but on an entirely different, qualitatively new basis.

The negation of the negation means a certain periodicity, recurrence in the progressive development of matter. But we should stress that a repetition of past stages of development is not an actual return to the old, but a rise of the new which often bears only an outward, formal resemblance to the old and radically differs from it for its internal nature. Sodium which opens the third period in Mendeleyev's system belongs, like lithium, to the group of alkali metals, but it has a more complex structure and its own intrinsic properties.

Social property prevailing under socialism reproduces, in a certain sense, the communal property of primitive society, but reproduces it on an entirely new material and spiritual basis, which can in no way be compared with the primitive-communal system.

*And so, development occurs through the negation of the old by the new, the lower by the higher. Since the new, negating the old, retains and develops the positive features of the old, development acquires a progressive character. At the same*

*time development proceeds along a spiral, with repetition at higher stages of certain sides and features of the lower stages.*

Such is the essence of the dialectical law of the negation of the negation.

### 3. How the Law of the Negation of the Negation Operates in Socialist Conditions

The law of the negation of the negation operates in socialist society as well, but in a somewhat different way.

The dominance of socialist property, the absence of antagonistic classes, the socio-political and ideological unity of the citizens of socialist society fully preclude such forms of negation as social revolution, class conflicts and sudden explosions characteristic of antagonistic class societies.

In socialist conditions the old features are negated when it becomes clear that they no longer correspond to the new conditions and tasks, when the objective prerequisites for overcoming the old ripen. The Soviet people, led by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, consciously replace the old, that which hinders progress, by the new. In the Soviet Union there takes place a continuous process of supplanting obsolescent machinery by new, more improved, of replacing old forms of organisation and economic management by new forms, etc. The negation of the old and obsolete reinforces the economic, political and ideological mainstays of socialist society and is one of the important factors making for its progressive development.

The development of socialist society is marked by exceptional progress and vigorous advance towards communism. This is one of the principal distinctions in the way that the law of the negation of the negation operates in socialist society.

A certain forward movement naturally takes place in capitalist society as well. But there this movement is limited and one-sided. Those branches of industry bringing the employers big profits are chiefly developed; this especially applies to plants working on military contracts. Under capitalism periods of advance give way to periods of deep recession, of crisis.

*In socialist society, on the other hand, progress is continuous* in all spheres of economic, political and cultural life. This is strikingly demonstrated by the high growth rates. The rate of development of Soviet industry is from three to five times greater than that in the most developed capitalist countries. The Soviet Union needed 40 years to increase industrial output 30 times, while it took the United States, Britain and Germany from 80 to 150 years to make similar progress. Moreover, in these 40 years the U.S.S.R. had to fight in devastating wars which wrought great destruction in the national economy and retarded development.

Soviet science and culture have many great achievements to their credit. Not so long ago the country was backward with nearly 80 per cent of the population illiterate, but it has now become a land of universal literacy. Soviet universities and colleges train millions of specialists; three times as many engineers graduate as in the United States. Artificial satellites of the Earth and Sun, powerful space rockets and interplanetary spaceships, atomic power plants, the first space flights in history by Soviet citizens—these are all signs of unparalleled scientific progress, a symbol of the creative power of triumphing communism.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that under socialism, progress follows a straight line. Here too development has a spiral-like character and frequently there is a certain repetition of stages already passed.

Let us take, for example, the development of forms of management in industry and construction. In the first years of Soviet power management was organised through regional and district economic councils. Later on these councils gave way to a system of ministries and centralised departments, each in charge of the given branch of the economy. The intricate task of industrialising the country could only be accomplished through strictly centralised management, because material resources were limited and there was a shortage of skilled personnel. But when industry and construction grew to such an extent that it became impossible to direct them from one centre, economic administration centres had to be brought closer to the factories and construction sites. For this purpose, after a nation-wide discussion, it was decided to replace the ministries by economic councils set

up in the economic administration areas. This was a certain negation of the negation, a return to the old, but on a qualitatively new basis. The economic councils of today contain certain features of the old economic councils, but they differ from the latter qualitatively by their technical and economic basis, by the composition and skill of personnel, and the scope of their activities.

* * *

In this chapter we have discussed the basic laws of materialist dialectics. These laws furnish the key to understanding universal motion and development in the material world, reveal their sources, driving forces which are contained in internal contradictions. These laws disclose the spiral-like character of development, its forward, progressive trend; they show that reality makes progress through constant replacement, through negation of the old by the new.

To gain a better idea of development we should now turn to the main categories of materialist dialectics.

*CHAPTER VIII*

# CATEGORIES OF MATERIALIST DIALECTICS

Any science, no matter what sphere of material reality it applies to, represents not only a system of laws, but also definite categories, i.e., the most general concepts which are elaborated in the process of development of each science and constitute its foundation. In mechanics, for example, such concepts are: mass, energy, force; in political economy—commodity, value, money, and so on.

In generalising the achievements of science and people's practical activity, philosophy has its own system of categories. *Philosophical categories* are concepts reflecting the general features and connections, sides and properties of reality. We have already analysed certain major categories in our study of philosophical materialism. These are first of all the categories of matter and consciousness, then motion, space and time. Studying the basic laws of Marxist dialectics, we have also examined such categories as contradiction, quantity, quality, leap, negation. In this chapter we shall discuss one more group of categories: the *particular* and the *universal*, *content and form*, *essence* and *phenomenon*, *cause* and *effect*, *necessity* and *chance*, *possibility* and *reality*.

A study of these categories will considerably broaden our understanding of the universal development and connections of the material world, the basic laws of Marxist dialectics.

The laws and categories of dialectics are interconnected. When we studied the basic laws of Marxist dialectics we learned that they, in effect, represent the relationship or connection of categories. The law of the passage of quantitative into

qualitative changes, for example, expresses a definite connection of the categories of quantity and quality, etc. Hence, without a knowledge of categories it is impossible to comprehend the laws. On the other hand, knowledge of the laws enables us to understand the essence of the categories of dialectics. The law of the unity and struggle of opposites thus makes it possible to reveal the real meaning of such antithetical categories as content and form, necessity and chance, possibility and reality, etc.

Before proceeding to discuss particular categories, let us ascertain their origin and also consider some of their common features.

## 1. Origin and Common Features of the Categories of Dialectics

The categories of Marxist dialectics are *a result, a generalisation of the centuries-old experience of people, of their labour and knowledge*. In the course of his practical activity man, coming in contact with, and cognising objects and phenomena of the world, has singled out their essential, general features and has fixed the results in categories, concepts. Categories of cause and effect, content and form and others took shape in man's mind as he came into contact, millions of times, with objectively existing causes and effects, the content and form of definite material bodies and other major aspects of reality. Categories are thus a result of man's practical and cognitive activity, are a stage in man's knowledge of the world around him. "Man is confronted with a *web* of natural phenomena," Lenin wrote. "Instinctive man, the savage, does not distinguish himself from nature. Conscious man does distinguish: categories are stages of distinguishing, i.e., of cognising the world."*

A result of practice and knowledge, the categories of materialist dialectics are of great importance for man's practical and cognitive activities. As stepping stones of knowledge, they help people to find their way in the intricate web of phenomena in nature and society, to reveal the interconnection and interdependence of things, the definite

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 93.

order and the law-governed character of their development and to choose the right course of practical activity.

Marxist dialectics discloses the essence of categories, the sources of their origin and above all emphasises their *objective* character. Categories have their source in objects and phenomena existing outside of man and they reflect the most general, essential features. Categories of cause and effect thus reflect the objectively existing relation between objects and processes, by which some of them cause other objects and processes to come into being, these latter being their effect.

In contrast to materialism, idealism denies the objective character of categories. From the point of view of subjective idealists, for example, categories exist only in the consciousness of man and have no relation to reality. Kant maintained that before man begins to know the world his consciousness contains categories of causality, necessity, chance, etc., with the help of which he allegedly introduces order into the chaotic world of natural phenomena. Present-day subjective idealists, in particular the neo-positivists, claim that categories are general concepts which are connected only with the direct sense-emotions of the subject and have no relation to the objective world existing outside of man. The objective idealist Hegel, although paying lip service to the objective character of categories, actually regarded them as stages, moments in the development of the absolute idea, the universal spirit.

Idealist views of categories are absolutely untenable. Practical activity, the development of science and people's personal experience show that categories have not been invented by man, but discovered by him in objective reality.

Categories are *interconnected*, *changeable*, and *mobile*, being a reflection of the unity of the material world, the universal connection and interaction of its objects and phenomena. The connection of categories is so close that under certain conditions they can turn one into another; thus, cause becomes effect and vice versa, necessity becomes chance, and chance turns into necessity, and so on. Categories are not only interconnected, but also changeable and mobile. As they reflect the constantly developing material world, they themselves change.

In studying the material world, man first of all notices the countless multitude of particular, individual objects and phenomena. Then, comparing them, he singles out features and connections that they have in common. We shall act the same way: we shall begin the examination of categories with the individual and the universal.

## 2. The Individual and the Universal

### *What Is the Individual and the Universal?*

Every object possesses a number of particular, intrinsic features. Let us take as example a poplar tree. It has size, a certain number of branches arranged in a particular way, special configuration of the roots and some other features.

Every man has his own idiosyncrasies, abilities and habits, interests and inclinations, walk and manner of speech. This is what singles him out from hundreds of millions of other people inhabiting our planet.

The poplar, the man, the individual object or phenomenon of the material world are the *individual* or the *particular*.

Anything particular, individual, however, does not exist by itself; it is connected with other objects and phenomena. A man lives on Earth, where many other people live around him. He has much in common with them being connected with them by thousands of the most diverse threads. He has some vocation, and this means that he possesses some features inherent in all people of that vocation. Man belongs to a definite class and a definite nation, therefore he has certain national and class distinctions. All people possess such features as anatomo-physiological structure, ability to feel and think, to work and speak, etc. Similarly each object, besides having its own peculiar, individual features, also has features in common with other objects.

The *universal* is that which is present in many individual, particular objects. While individual features set the given object apart from others, the universal draws it together with these other objects, connects it with them and places it in a definite species or class of homogeneous objects.

The individual and the universal are found in dialectical unity in any object. On the one hand, the individual contains the universal. It, as Lenin put it, "exists only in the connection that leads to the universal". Each individual organism is thus connected with the universal, the species to which it belongs and with which it has common features, and through the species it is connected with the even more universal, the genus. Taking into account the connection of the particular with the universal, the existence of the universal in the particular, dialectical materialism considers that each *particular is universal in one way or another*.

On the other hand, the universal exists only in the particular or through the particular. There is not a single species of plant or animal outside individual plants or animals. Being universal in relation to the individual, the species does not embrace all the features of the individual organisms it includes, but only the essential, recurring ones. That is why Lenin described the universal as a *side* or *essence* of the particular.

The individual and the universal are not only interconnected but also change constantly. The boundary between them is not fixed. In certain conditions, during development, they pass into one another: the particular becomes the universal, and vice versa.

In the development of organisms there have been instances when a new, useful characteristic acquired by an *individual* organism is transmitted by heredity, and in time becomes common to the mass, the vast number of individual organisms, i.e., it turns into a *universal* characteristic, a characteristic of the species. If, however, a universal characteristic loses its significance for the vital activity of the species, it gradually withers away, becomes atrophied and in succeeding generations will only seldom occur; it may be met in *individual* organisms as an atavism, a reversion to the organisation of remote ancestors. Here the universal has turned into the individual.

Dialectics of the universal and the individual manifests itself in social phenomena as well.

### *Importance of the Categories of the Individual and the Universal*

It is very important in scientific and practical activities to take into account the dialectics of the individual and the universal. Only knowledge of the interconnection, the dialectics of the individual and the universal, enables us to find our way in the maze of diverse processes of objective reality, to discover the laws of its development and to apply them properly in practice. Moreover, knowledge of the universal, and its connection with the particular, forms the basis of scientific forecasts, makes it possible not only to disclose important features of known objects and phenomena, determine their main course, the direction of their development, but also to deduce the existence of other particular objects and processes so far unknown to man. Mendeleyev for example, proceeding from the Periodic Law of chemical elements, which revealed their most general properties, deduced the existence of four chemical elements unknown at that time. Somewhat later he described in detail the properties of three of them. After a certain time these elements (gallium, scandium and germanium) were discovered.

Strict account of the interaction of the individual and the universal is of great importance in social life, especially at the present time when mankind is making the transition from capitalism to communism. The course of this transition largely depends on the correct solution to the question of the correlation between the general laws of the socialist revolution and its national distinctions. That is why such a keen ideological struggle is now being fought on this issue.

Present-day revisionists ignore the general laws governing socialist development; they raise to an absolute position the individual, concrete national conditions of various countries. In contrast to the theory of scientific communism, they put up unscientific ideas of "national communism" which, in effect, amount to the renunciation of the socialist revolution and betrayal of the interests of the working class.

Dogmatists, on the other hand, ignore the need to take into account concrete historical conditions in a revolution. They claim that revolutions everywhere are made according

to one and the same pattern, pre-cast once and for all. What makes this position harmful is that it belittles the creative initiative of the common people, undermines their faith in socialism and thereby creates great obstacles in the way of the revolution.

The views of the revisionists and dogmatists were criticised in the Declaration of the 1957 Meeting of Representatives of Communist and Workers' Parties. The Declaration stressed that the replacement of capitalism by socialism *in all countries* is a single revolutionary process governed by general, intrinsic, fundamental laws. These laws are as follows:

leadership of the working masses by the working class, whose core is the Marxist-Leninist party, in making the socialist revolution in one or another form and in establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat in one or another form;

alliance of the working class with the main body of the peasantry and other sections of the working people;

abolition of capitalist ownership and the introduction of public ownership of the basic means of production;

gradual socialist transformation of agriculture;

planned development of the national economy aimed at building socialism and communism, at raising the living standards of the working people;

carrying out the socialist revolution in ideology and culture, development of a large intelligentsia devoted to the working class, to all working people, to the cause of socialism;

abolition of national oppression and establishment of equality and fraternal friendship among the peoples;

defence of the socialist gains from the encroachments of external and internal enemies;

solidarity of the working class of the given country with the working class of other countries—proletarian internationalism.

Marxism-Leninism, while pointing out that these principal laws are indispensable for the transition to socialism, does not at all ignore the national distinctions of each country. On the contrary, it calls for the creative application of these laws to concrete historical conditions. No two countries have the same level of economic development, nor the same correlation of class forces, nor the same historical and national

traditions. All this taken together determines the specific features and distinctions in the forms and methods of building socialism and the pace of socialist changes in various countries.

Now that we have given an idea of the particular, and shown that it is bound up with the universal, we shall go further into it and find out what are the particular objects, things and phenomena which man constantly encounters.

The category of content and form gives an idea of what a given object actually is.

## 3. Content and Form

### *What Is Content and Form?*

*Content* is the sum-total of elements and processes constituting the given object or phenomenon. *Form* is the structure, the organisation of the content. It is not something external in relation to content, but is inherent in it.

Elementary particles, and processes associated with their movement, make up the content of the atom of a chemical element. Their arrangement constitutes its form. Metabolism, irritability, contractibility and other processes, and also the organs, tissues and cells in which these processes take place go to make up the content of the living organism. The form of the living organism is represented by the way vital processes transpire in it and by the structure of its organs and tissues.

Content and form are inherent in all social phenomena as well. Thus, the productive forces (in particular the instruments of production and the people who use them) represent the content of a historically determined mode of production. Relations of production (the relations of people in the process of production based on their relation to these instruments) constitute the form of a mode of production.*

Dialectical materialism proceeds from the unity of content and form, their inseparability. Both form and content are

* The productive forces and relations of production will be examined in greater detail in Chapter XI, "Mode of Production—The Material Foundation of Society's Life".

inherent in the given object and therefore cannot be separated from one another. There is no content in general, but only formed content, i.e., content which has a definite form. Similarly there is no pure form without any content. Form always has content, it presupposes a definite content whose structure or organisation it represents.

### *Decisive Significance of Content and Active Role of Form*

Having learned that each object represents a unity of content and form, let us now examine how content and form are interconnected, how they interact in the process of the development of objects.

Content is very active. By virtue of its intrinsic contradictions it constantly develops, moves. Then, with the change in the content, the form also changes. *Content determines form.*

Let us trace, for example, the development of social production. It always begins with the content—the productive forces. In an effort to produce as much material wealth as possible, people constantly improve the instruments of production and increase their own skill. This inevitably leads to a change in the form of social production—the relations of production.

In nature too content determines form. From biology we know that a change in the conditions of existence of a living organism is followed at first by a change in its functions (the intrinsic type of metabolism and other processes which make up the content of life), by the appearance of new protein substances, etc. Only then, on the basis of the change in content, does the form—the organisation or structure of the organism—change as well. If, for example, a plant is transferred from a humid to a dry climate, its metabolism changes. This change will proceed in such a way as to enable the plant to obtain more and lose less moisture in the new conditions. The structure of the organism will change correspondingly: its roots will penetrate deeper into the soil, drawing additional moisture; the leaves will become narrower so that less moisture will be evaporated.

Although form is engendered by content, it does not remain passive in relation to it. It *actively* influences content, facilitates or retards its development. A new form, corre-

sponding to the content, promotes the latter's development, forward movement. An old form, not corresponding to the content, however, retards its development. If we take as an example social production again we shall find that its form, relations of production, not only depends on the content, but itself plays an active part in its development. Progressive, socialist relations of production, for example, ensure exceptionally high growth rates of industrial and agricultural output, an advance of the entire socialist economy. But production relations of contemporary capitalism restrain, hamper the development of productive forces, and at times lead to their direct destruction. From this it follows that the role and significance of form in development must not be underestimated.

In analysing the interaction of form and content we should also bear in mind that, depending on the conditions, one and the same content can develop in *different forms*.

The international communist movement knows from experience that the dictatorship of the proletariat, which makes up the content of the transition period from capitalism to socialism is possible in more than one form. In the U.S.S.R. the dictatorship of the proletariat assumed the form of Soviets of Working People's Deputies and in other countries of the world socialist system, the form of People's Democracy. It is possible that the future may produce new forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

Diversity of forms reinforces the content, makes it richer and more varied, enables it to develop in the most different conditions. That is why in revolutionary struggle and communist construction it is so important to be able to choose the forms which best of all suit the concrete historical conditions.

### *Contradiction Between Form and Content*

To have a better understanding of the correlation of content and form, it is important to explain its *contradictory* nature. We have already said that form is more stable than content. That is why it lags behind content's development,

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* This question will be examined in greater detail in Chapter XVII, "The State". See p. 296.

grows old and comes into contradiction with it. The contradiction between the old form and the new content usually culminates in the discarding of the old form and its replacement by a new one, as a result of which content acquires scope for further development.

Thus, as conditions change an organism is compelled to assimilate new nutritive substances. In connection with this, the content of the organism, i.e., its intrinsic metabolism and all its vital activity, changes more or less rapidly. As for the form, the structure of the organism, it does not keep pace with the development of the content and comes into contradiction with it. This contradiction is resolved by a change in the structure of the organism, bringing it into conformity with the changed content. As a result, existing organs are transformed or new ones arise. For example, when organisms pass from an aquatic environment to conditions of amphibian life, they gradually develop lungs instead of gills, limbs instead of fins, etc.

In social life too there is contradiction between content and form, as clearly demonstrated by the above example relating to the development of social production.

In the course of development the new content (productive forces) comes into contradiction with the old form (relations of production). This contradiction is resolved through the replacement of the obsolete relations of production by new ones which ensure the further unhindered development of the productive forces. In the course of development of capitalist society, for example, the productive forces as represented by social large-scale machine production have come into contradiction with the relations of production based on private capitalist ownership. In Russia this antagonistic contradiction was resolved by the socialist revolution which replaced the old capitalist form of production by a new one, by the relations of production founded on social, collective property. In imperialist countries the contradiction between form and content of social production still has to be resolved.

Under socialism too there is a contradiction between the form and the content of social production. But this contradiction is not of an antagonistic character and is successfully eliminated.*

* For a more detailed exposition see Chapter XII.

By overcoming these and other contradictions and difficulties, Soviet people cast aside the old, obsolete forms hindering communist construction. At the same time the process of improving all forms of economic, political and cultural life of socialist society steadily continues.

Now that we have examined what the content and form of an object are, let us see whether all its elements and aspects are of the same importance, whether all of them play an equal part in the existence and development of the given object. To answer this question we must examine the categories of essence and phenomenon.

## 4. Essence and Phenomenon

### *What Is Essence and Phenomenon?*

The concept of essence is similar to the concept of content but is not identical with it. Whereas content represents the sum-total of *all* elements and processes constituting a given object, *essence* is the *chief*, *internal*, relatively stable side of an object (or the total of its sides and relations). Essence determines the nature of an object, all its other sides and characteristics follow from it.

Metabolism is the essence of a living organism. It underlies all the vital functions and comprises the inner nature of all living bodies. As pointed out by Engels, from metabolism, which represents the essential function of protein, follow all other factors of life: irritability, contractibility, the possibility of growth, internal movement.*

In social phenomena essence also expresses the internal, chief side of processes. In describing imperialism, the higher stage of capitalism, Lenin defined it as monopoly capitalism. It is the domination of the monopolies taking the place of competition that is the essence of imperialism. From the domination of the monopolies stem all other features of imperialism, above all the extraction of monopoly superprofits by those capitalists who are members of monopoly associations. In their quest for superprofits the imperialists

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* See Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1959, pp. 116-17.

unite in international monopoly unions and divide the world into their spheres of influence, monopolise finance, export capital instead of goods and intensify the exploitation of the working people in their own countries and also of the peoples in the colonies and dependencies. All this leads to the extreme aggravation of capitalism's intrinsic contradictions. Imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution.

The essence of socialist society is the dominance of socialist property and the planned nature of the economy, the absence of exploitation, co-operation and mutual assistance between members of society, the fullest satisfaction of the material and cultural requirements of the members of society through the development and improvement of production on the basis of advanced techniques.

What is a phenomenon? *A phenomenon is the outward, direct expression of essence, the form in which it is manifested.* Metabolism as the essence of everything living is revealed in the most diverse phenomena. It is manifested in the nearly half a million species of plants and about one and a half million species of animals. All of them differ from each other in outward appearance, degree of development; they assimilate nutrition, grow and propagate differently.

The essence of socialism is expressed, for example, in the following phenomena of daily Soviet life: construction of new factories, powerful electric stations, vigorous technical progress in the most diverse branches of the economy, the unprecedented pace of building houses and cultural establishments, reduction of the working day, etc.

### *Dialectics of Essence and Phenomenon*

Having discussed what essence and phenomenon are, let us see in what relation they stand to each other.

Essence and phenomenon are a unity. They are interconnected and inseparable. Essence *appears phenomenally*, phenomenon is *essential*, Lenin wrote. Phenomenon is the selfsame essence as manifested in reality. The outward, surface side of reality, the individual properties, moments and sides of things make up the phenomenon. Essence is the same phenomena, the same multifarious moments, sides, but taken in their most stable, profound and general form. Lenin com-

pared essence to a relatively calm, powerful and deep current of a swiftly flowing river, which on the surface has waves, and foam. "... *But even the foam* is an expression of essence!"*

Essence is necessarily revealed in each phenomenon, but not fully, only a certain small part of it. Phenomenon does not exhaust essence, but presents it from one side only. For example, in the Soviet Union recently a new system of higher pensions has been introduced; this expresses a small part of socialism's essence, presents this essence only from one side—the concern of the socialist state for its old people.

There is no "pure" essence, i.e., the kind that would not manifest itself in anything. Every essence reveals itself in a mass of phenomena. The essence of socialism manifests itself through many events and facts of everyday life in socialist society.

Essence is not seen on the surface, it is hidden and cannot be directly observed. It can be disclosed only in the course of prolonged, comprehensive study of an object. If the form of manifestation and the essence of things coincided directly, Marx wrote, every science would be superfluous. It is the task of science to reveal essence, the internal, deep and underlying processes behind the multitude of phenomena, outward sides and features of reality.

### *Importance of the Categories of Essence and Phenomenon*

Knowledge of the dialectics of essence and phenomenon is very important in life, for science and practical activity.

This knowledge, for example, gives scientists the confidence that however complex the process of cognising the phenomena they study, however deeply essence is hidden behind these phenomena, it will eventually become known. Astronomers, for example, conducted thorough observations of the Sun for many years. With the aid of instruments they discovered spots and protuberances on the Sun and traced the fluxes of various particles emitted by the Sun. But all these phenomena by themselves gave no clue to the deep processes taking place within the Sun, the sources of solar energy. It

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 130.

took science quite a long time before it could reveal the essence of the processes behind these phenomena. It was discovered that thermonuclear reactions (formation of helium from hydrogen) take place in the Sun. It is the colossal energy released as a result of these reactions that maintains the very high temperature of the Sun.

Knowledge of essence is particularly necessary as phenomena often tend to give a false idea of the character of a process. It seems to us, for example, that the Sun moves around the Earth, while in reality we know that the Earth moves around the Sun. It might seem that democracy exists in the imperialist world; after all, universal suffrage, freedom of speech, of the press, freedom to form political parties and groups, etc., are formally proclaimed. But in reality democracy under imperialism is a mere deception, it is limited democracy, democracy only for the rich.

Knowledge based only on what appears to be, on manifestations of essence, cannot give a correct picture of the world and cannot serve as a guide to action. Inability to differentiate phenomenon from essence leads to serious mistakes in theory and practice.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism made model analyses of the essence of social phenomena. Among them is the discovery by Marx of the essence of capitalist production, which constituted a whole epoch in the development of social ideas.

Bourgeois economists and sociologists, confining themselves to a study of phenomena, of what only appears to be true, have claimed, and continue to claim, that there is no exploitation in capitalist society, that the worker receives all that he earns from the capitalist. From their point of view, the source of capitalist profit is not the exploitation of the workers, but capital itself invested by the capitalists in production.

What is the real state of affairs?

In reality the situation is entirely different. The worker needs a certain amount of means of subsistence for himself and for his family. To obtain them he is compelled to go to the capitalist and sell his labour. It may appear that an ordinary purchase-and-sale transaction takes place between the worker and the capitalist: the worker sells his labour and the

capitalist buys it, the worker works, while the capitalist pays him wages.

Superficially this seems to be an equal transaction between the capitalist and the worker. Bourgeois ideologists, limiting themselves to it, arrive at the absolutely false conclusion that under capitalism there is no exploitation. They do not want to see the true essence of capitalist production.

Marx did not confine himself to an analysis of the superficial phenomena of capitalist society. Behind the phenomenon, the semblance of an equal transaction between the capitalist and the worker, he disclosed the essence of exploitation of capitalist production. Marx showed that labour-power is a special commodity capable of producing material values. Moreover, the values it produces are worth much more than the wages paid by the capitalist. The capitalist pays for only part of the value of the goods produced by the worker and keeps the rest; Marx used the word surplus-value to describe this part. It is this, and this only, that is the source of capitalist profit.

Marx's discovery of the essence of capitalist exploitation is of tremendous historical importance. It makes it possible to reveal the basis of the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, to show why struggle between them is inevitable and that it ultimately leads to the socialist revolution and the fall of capitalism.

This example clearly shows the great importance which knowledge of the essence of objects and processes has for science and revolutionary practice.

And so, we have analysed the individual and the universal, content and form, essence and phenomenon, i.e., everything that helps us to understand a given object or phenomenon. Objects and phenomena, however, do not exist in isolation, but are interconnected and none of them can be understood outside of this connection. To study an object in connection with others means above all to establish the cause of its origin. We now go on to examine the categories of cause and effect.

## 5. Cause and Effect

### *What Is Cause and Effect?*

In the objective world we observe the constant interaction of phenomena, as a result of which some phenomena give rise to others; these in turn give rise to others, and so on. Friction, for example, causes heat, drought, crop failure, etc. The interaction of phenomena is also observed in social life. The national-liberation movement, for example, has brought about the break-up of imperialism's colonial system.

A phenomenon or group of interacting phenomena which precede another such phenomenon or group and give rise to it are called *cause*. The phenomenon produced by the action of the cause is called *effect*.

Cause always *precedes* effect, but succession in time is not an adequate sign of cause. Day, for example, follows night, but night is not the cause of day. The alternation of day and night is caused by the rotation of the Earth on its axis.

Causal dependence between two phenomena exists when one of them not only precedes the other, but inevitably gives rise to it.

Cause should not be confused with occasion. *Occasion* is an event which directly precedes the effect, is not the cause itself, but sets it in motion. Thus, the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince Ferdinand in the town of Sarajevo in June 1914 was the occasion for unleashing the First World War. The actual cause of the war, however, was the contradictions between the rival imperialist powers.

Cause should also be distinguished from the *conditions* in which it operates. Productive labour is the cause of all social wealth. But for labour to produce wealth, an object of labour and tools for working on this object are needed. Neither the object of labour nor the tools bring wealth by themselves, but they are a necessary condition for man's labour.

### *Criticism of Anti-Marxist Views of Causality*

In the material world causality has a general, universal character. No phenomena exist or can exist without cause,

for everything has its cause. "There is no smoke without fire," as the old saying goes. Causality is objective, it has not been introduced into reality by man's reason or by some supernatural force. Causality is inherent in reality and is discovered by man in the process of cognition and practical activity.

The dialectical-materialist understanding of causality is diametrically opposed to the religious interpretation of the world, according to which god is the cause of everything existing. God supposedly created the world order and he, by performing all kinds of miracles, disturbs and refashions it. Divine will is claimed to be the prime cause of everything existing. Religion also preaches the *teleological* theory of the world, which regards the development of the world as the realisation of some kind of supernatural preordained aims. From the standpoint of teleology, Engels ironically wrote, cats were created to eat mice, mice, to be eaten by cats, and all of nature, to prove the wisdom of the creator.

There are, however, neither miracles nor preordained aims. Everything develops on the basis of natural causes, objective laws. It goes without saying that nature cannot set, and does not set, itself any aims. In society the situation is different, because people act consciously, and set themselves definite aims, and work to achieve them. These aims, however, are not preordained by the Almighty, but are determined by objective causes, by the entire course of historical development. Communism, the great goal of mankind, is such an aim based on a thorough analysis of objective causality and the laws governing social development.

The doctrine that the natural cause of things is subordinated to objective causality, governed by laws, is called *determinism*. Determinism is the opposite of *indeterminism*, an idealistic doctrine denying objective causality, necessity, laws. Indeterminism is an idealist approach to causality; it looks for the order, the causes of development of phenomena, not in the outside objective world, but in consciousness, in reason.

Dialectical materialism is opposed not only to indeterminism, but also to *mechanistic determinism*, which reduces the whole diversity of causes to outward, mechanical

influences. Such determinism prevailed in natural science in the 17th-18th centuries when mechanics was the most developed of all the natural sciences.

Mechanistic determinism may be applied in studying the movement of macro-bodies, in technical calculations of machines, bridges and other installations. But attempts to explain numerous biological processes, mental activity and social life from the point of view of mechanistic determinism are erroneous.

Mechanistic determinism also proved inapplicable to quantum mechanics, a new field of physics. The micro-particles studied by quantum mechanics qualitatively differ from the macro-bodies studied by classical mechanics. Whereas the co-ordinates (position in space) and speed of macro-bodies can be determined exactly and simultaneously by the laws of classical mechanics, this cannot be done with elementary particles. In the micro-world where the laws of classical mechanics are invalid, the laws of quantum mechanics operate. They make it possible to determine either the co-ordinate or the speed of the particle in each given moment of time, not with absolute accuracy, but only approximately, with a certain degree of probability.

When the enemies of materialism realised that mechanistic determinism does not apply to objects of the micro-world they proclaimed the "collapse" of determinism in general and the triumph of indeterminism. They declared that causality in micro-processes is created by man himself in the course of observation and measuring operations. In reality, however, modern physics in no way refuted the dialectical-materialist principle of causality; on the contrary, it furnished additional proof of it. At the same time it showed that determinism appears in different ways in various spheres of reality.

Dialectical materialism is also opposed to the metaphysical separation of cause and effect. Proceeding from the achievements of science and practice, dialectical materialism asserts that cause and effect are *inseparably connected*, that there is no effect without cause and vice versa. The connection between cause and effect is of an internal, law-governed character. This is the kind of connection in which effect stems from cause, is a result of its action. Engendered

by cause, effect does not remain indifferent to its cause and exerts a reverse action upon it. Thus, economic relations between people in the process of production are the cause, the source of political, philosophical and other ideas, but these ideas, in turn, influence the development of economic relations.

The interconnection of cause and effect also means that one and the same phenomenon can be the cause in one connection and the effect in another. The combustion of coal in boilers at electric power plants is the cause of the conversion of water into steam. Steam, being the effect of coal combustion, is itself the cause of motion of the generator's rotor. Its rotation generates electricity, which is the source, the cause of motion of numerous machines and mechanisms giving people heat, light, etc. This train of argument could be taken further. What is characteristic of causality is this endless chain of reciprocal connections, the *universal interaction* of objects and phenomena of the world where each link is simultaneously both a cause and an effect.

### *Scientific and Practical Importance of Causality*

Knowledge of the causal dependence of phenomena is extremely important in science and practice. By discovering the causes of useful phenomena man can facilitate their action and thereby accelerate the development of the useful phenomena and processes he needs. Knowing, for example, that good tillage of the soil, timely sowing and harvesting, etc., are the cause of high yields, the best farms constantly improve their agricultural methods.

Knowledge of the causes of harmful phenomena enables man to eliminate these phenomena, restrict their action and thereby prevent the onset of effects undesirable for man.

The ability to reveal the main causes of the given phenomenon is particularly important for practical activity. By discovering the main causes, people can understand the origin and essence of a phenomenon, its place in relation to other phenomena, and the laws governing its development.

The *main* cause is the one without which the given phenomenon could not arise; it determines the main features of this phenomenon.

What, for example, is the main cause of the Soviet people's victory over the Nazi invaders in the Second World War? This cause is the social and state system of the Soviet Union, the might of the Soviet Armed Forces, and not the vast territory or the rigorous Russian winter and similar claims put forward by bourgeois ideologists. The latter factors, although playing some part, were by no means the chief, determining causes.

The Communist Party always looks for the chief, decisive causes. The ability to single them out from the innumerable other causes makes it possible to find that particular, *main* link in the chain of events, which enables the Party and the people to cope with every task confronting them in any given period. Lenin maintained that the art of politics consists in finding this main link in the chain of social phenomena, grasping it firmly and thereby ensuring full success.

Acceleration of technical progress is the chief link in the further development of the Soviet Union's national economy. Aware of this, the Party has organised and headed the all-out movement for technical progress.

Causality is the most general, universal connection. But it does not exhaust all the many connections of reality and represents only a small part of the world connections. Necessary and chance connections are also very important in the intricate web of the world's causal connections. We shall now examine them.

## 6. Necessity and Chance

### *What Is Necessity and Chance?*

In order to understand necessity and chance let us first answer the following question: in given conditions are all the events necessary? Must all of them proceed in a certain way and not in any other way?

We all know that if a seed is planted it will germinate, given moisture and heat. But the young plant may perish as a result of hail. Are both these events (the germination of the seed and the perishing of the plant) necessary?

Not both of them. Our day-to-day experience tells us that the germination of the seed in given conditions, i. e., the presence of corresponding heat and moisture, is necessary. Such is the nature of the plant itself. But the hail is something which might or might not have been, it might have destroyed or merely damaged the plant. The hail does not at all follow from the nature of the plant and was not necessary in the given conditions.

A phenomenon or event which, under definite conditions, must take place is called *necessity* (in our example the germination of the seed is a necessity). Day follows night, one season follows another necessarily. The birth and growth of the communist movement of the working class under capitalism is a necessity. It is engendered by the living conditions of the working class, its position in society and the tasks set before it.

Necessity follows from the essence, the internal nature of the developing phenomenon. It is constant and stable for the given phenomenon.

In contrast to necessity, *chance* (in our example the destruction of the plant by hail) need not necessarily happen. In the given conditions it might occur and it might not occur, it might proceed in one way or in another. Chance does not follow from the nature of the given object, it is unstable and temporary. But chance is not without cause. Its cause is not in the object itself, but outside of it—in external conditions.

### *Dialectics of Necessity and Chance*

Necessity and chance are dialectically interconnected. One and the same event is both necessary and accidental simultaneously—necessary in one respect and accidental in another. The same hail, being accidental in regard to the destruction of the plant, is a necessary effect of the atmospheric conditions in the area where it fell.

In contrast to dialecticians, metaphysicians deny the interconnection of necessity and chance. Some of them recognise only necessity and deny the possibility of chance factors in development. From their point of view, everything is inevitable, necessary, and therefore man is power-

less to do anything about it, he must merely passively await the inevitable, inexorable course of events. Other philosophers recognise only chance, which in effect means renunciation of science, refusal to recognise man's ability to foresee the course of events and to direct them.

Necessity and chance can pass into one another: what is chance in certain conditions is necessity in other, different conditions, and vice versa. In primitive society, for example, the exchange of commodities had an accidental character. Everything produced by a commune was as a rule consumed by it. With the rise and development of private property the exchange of goods was extended, and under capitalism it turned into objective necessity.

Necessity and chance do not exist in isolation from each other. In a process necessity appears as the main direction, the tendency of development, but this tendency breaks its way through a mass of chance phenomena. Chance *supplements* necessity, is a *form of its manifestation.* The mass of chance phenomena always conceals objective necessity or law. Let us take as example gas in a vessel. The molecules of this gas are in constant haphazard motion, they clash with each other and with the walls of the vessel accidentally. In spite of this the pressure of the gas on all the walls is identical, it is necessarily determined by the laws of physics. The chance movement of molecules, for example, paves the way for necessity which determines not only the pressure but also the temperature, density, heat capacity and other properties of the gas. Chance serves as the form for the manifestation of necessity in social development too. The law of value under capitalism is manifested in accidental fluctuations of prices in the market, shaped by supply and demand.

### *Importance of the Categories of Necessity and Chance*

It is very important to take into account the objective dialectics of necessity and chance in science and practice. The task of science is to discover the internal, necessary connections behind the external appearances, the numerous chance events and connections. Knowledge of the laws, of objective necessity enables man to subordinate the numerous phenomena of nature and social life to his needs. Every

science must primarily aim at cognition of necessity. In this sense science is the enemy of chance. The task of social science is therefore to reveal the objective necessity of social development and, on the basis of this cognised necessity, to transform the social system in the interests of the workers.

Science, however, should not ignore chance. Since accidents occur and exert some kind of influence on life, science must take into account their role in development, protect man from them. Agricultural science, for example, must elaborate methods of soil tillage, cultivation and harvesting of crops which would enable man to obtain high yields under the most unexpected, adverse weather conditions.

In different historical conditions the interconnection of necessity and chance is not identical. The dominance of capitalist property determines the spontaneous operation of necessity in capitalist conditions. The law of value, the law of anarchy and competition break their way through a mass of chance events. Under capitalism people are therefore deprived of the opportunity to plan the life of society. They are mere toys of these spontaneous forces. Profit is the regulator of capitalist production, but it operates through numerous accidental fluctuations of market prices, which depend on similarly accidental changes of supply and demand. The distribution of labour under capitalism is also accidental. All this creates insecurity for the worker—he may become unemployed and lose his means of livelihood at any moment. Even the businessman has no peace of mind under capitalism, particularly the small or medium employer who may be ruined at any moment, because he cannot withstand the competition of more powerful rivals.

Under socialism, due to the operation of its inherent laws, people have an opportunity to foresee the course of history and to plan their activities accordingly in all spheres of life. Social necessity appears in the conscious, purposive activity of people. National economic plans in the socialist countries are witnesses to the skilful use of the objective necessity of social development.

The effect of chance in socialist society is very much reduced by the conscious, planned effort of the people led by the Communist Party. Accidents occur, however, even under

socialism. Sometimes due to certain circumstances some branches of industry or agriculture lag behind, individual factories do not fulfil their plans, etc. This leads to some disproportions and discrepancies in the development of the economy. At different times accidents occur due to weather conditions, drought, floods, snowfall, etc.

The Communist Party and the government strive to reduce to a minimum the adverse influence of chance in socialist society. To these ends improvements are constantly being made in the planning and organisation of production and the latest scientific achievements are applied. A ramified system of state reserves is built up to meet exigencies. Since a considerable number of chance deviations from the intended line of development is often the result of poor management by individual economic executives, the Communist Party pays special attention to improving and reinforcing the leadership of various branches of the economy, fostering a sense of responsibility among leading personnel for the job entrusted them.

Necessity always appears in definite objective conditions. But these conditions themselves change, and so necessity, too, changes and develops. But each new necessity does not arise in a ready, fully-shaped form, but at first exists merely as a possibility, turning into reality only in given favourable conditions.

Let us examine the categories of possibility and reality.

## 7. Possibility and Reality

### *What Is Possibility and Reality?*

The new, the developing is necessary, but it does not arise at once. At first only definite prerequisites, factors making for its birth are created; these prerequisites then mature, develop, and by virtue of the operation of objective laws, the new object and phenomenon arise. These prerequisites for the birth of the new, which are present in the existing, are called *possibilities*. Thus, every germ possesses the possibility of development, of transformation into an adult organism.

The adult organism which develops from the germ is a reality. *Reality* is the achieved, realised possibility.

Possibilities stem from objective laws, are engendered by them. The law of the unity of the organism and the environment, for example, creates the possibility, through a change of external conditions, to act purposively on organisms, to create new species of plants and animals. The law of planned, proportionate development of the national economy under socialism creates the possibility of planning, etc.

Since objects and phenomena of the world are contradictory, possibilities too are contradictory. We should differentiate between progressive (positive) and reactionary (negative) possibilities. Any social revolution, for example, contains both the positive possibility of victory by the progressive forces and the negative possibility of victory by the reactionary forces. But, owing to the operation of history's objective laws, the progressive possibilities ultimately triumph, while victory of reactionary possibilities, although it occurs in some instances, is only temporary, transitory. The victory of reaction in the Russian revolution of 1905-07, for example, was temporary. A few years later, in 1917, the working class, in alliance with the peasants, won a decisive victory, first over tsarism, and then over the bourgeoisie.

Like everything in the world, possibilities *develop*: some of them grow, while others diminish. Russia was the first nation to break the chain of imperialism and for several years was surrounded by imperialist states. That is why immediately after the victory of the Revolution, alongside the possibility of socialism's victory there was a certain possibility of the restoration of capitalism. As the strength of the Soviet Union grew, the possibility of socialism's victory steadily increased and became reality. "*Socialism*," it is stressed in the Programme of the C.P.S.U., "*which Marx and Engels scientifically predicted as inevitable and the plan for the construction of which was mapped out by Lenin, has become a reality in the Soviet Union.*" On the other hand, as socialism advanced, the possibilities of restoring capitalism steadily diminished and now practically no longer exist, because there are no forces in the world which could restore capitalism in the Soviet Union, which could crush the mighty

socialist community. The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is complete and final.

Marxist dialectics differentiates between abstract and real possibilities.

An *abstract* (formal) possibility is one which in the given historical conditions cannot be realised. The possibility of a collision between planets of the solar system and other large celestial bodies, for example, is abstract: the chance of its occurrence is infinitesimally small.

Abstract, formal possibility must not be confused with the impossible. The impossible can never be realised because it runs counter to objective laws. It is impossible, for example, to reconcile the interests of the bourgeoisie and the working class. Abstract possibility does not run counter to objective laws and in principle can become reality, but only when the appropriate conditions mature.

A *real* possibility has prerequisites for realisation in given definite historical conditions. For example, the possibility of liberating all the colonies and dependent countries from the oppression of colonialism is real. This process is in fact taking place at present.

The distinctions between abstract and real possibilities are relative. In the process of development an abstract possibility can become real. Only a few years ago the possibility of man's flight to other planets was abstract because the technical facilities were lacking. Now, this possibility has become real. The time is not far off when man will step onto the Moon and other planets of the solar system. The dream of Utopian Socialists early in the 19th century about the possibility of transition to socialism was abstract: at that time the forces necessary for socialism had not yet matured, there was no sufficiently organised revolutionary proletariat. But in the present epoch this possibility has become real and in a large part of the world it has already been turned into reality.

### *Conversion of Possibility into Reality in Socialist Conditions*

In nature, possibility is turned into reality spontaneously, unconsciously. In society, on the other hand, the purposive, conscious activity of people is of decisive importance in the

realisation of possibilities. Without the intervention of man, acting on the basis of cognised laws, possibility does not turn into reality. The possibility of preserving peace which exists at present is becoming reality as a result of vigorous work by all the peace-loving forces of mankind.

In the course of their practical activities, transforming the world, people discover the intrinsic possibilities and work to turn them into reality. In socialist conditions it is particularly important to take into account real possibilities and work for their realisation.

The Soviet socialist system contains immense possibilities for economic, political and cultural progress. These possibilities are ably taken into account and realised in good time by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which carefully supports and nurtures the shoots of the new, the progressive. Everyone is interested in the realisation of progressive possibilities and that is why in socialist society possibilities are rapidly turned into reality.

The possibility of building socialism, which arose as a result of the October Socialist Revolution, was realised by the Soviet people in a very brief period. The building of socialism gave rise to another possibility, the real possibility of building communism.

The Soviet Union now has all the possibilities for building communism. It has a social system of tremendous creative force, a powerful industry equipped with first-class machinery, a large-scale mechanised agriculture and the most advanced science in the world. The country's natural wealth is inexhaustible and this is a prerequisite for unlimited economic development. The Soviet Union's skilled workers are capable of accomplishing the most complex tasks of communist construction.

The ways for turning the possibilities of building communism in the Soviet Union into reality are outlined in the Programme of the C.P.S.U., which maps out a concrete plan of communist construction.

Having examined the laws and categories of Marxist dialectics, we have an idea of universal development and connections of the material world. Our task now is to ascertain how this material world is cognised by man. For this we have to study the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism.

*CHAPTER IX*

# THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Dialectical materialism takes account of the wealth of experience accumulated by mankind and the greatest achievements of science and revolutionary practice, and on this basis concludes that the world is fully knowable and that man through his reason is capable of forming a correct idea of reality.

Let us now examine in detail the process of cognition of the world.

## 1. What Is Knowledge?

*Knowledge* is active, purposive reflection of the objective world and its laws in man's mind. The source of knowledge is the outside world around man. It acts on man and arouses in him corresponding sensations, ideas and concepts. Man sees forests, fields and mountains, perceives the heat and light of the sun, hears the singing of birds, smells the scent of flowers. If these objects existing outside of man's consciousness did not act on him, he would not have the least idea about them.

The Marxist theory of knowledge is based on recognition of the objective world, its objects and phenomena as the *sole source* of human knowledge.

Idealists do not consider objective reality the source of our knowledge. In idealist philosophy the object of knowledge is either consciousness, sensation of the individual man (subject) or some kind of a mystic consciousness which is sup-

posed to exist outside of man (take "absolute idea", "universal spirit", etc.). Religion too approaches the question in this way: man is incapable of cognising the essence of phenomena of nature and social life. He can merely describe and classify the results of divine creation, moreover, he is capable of doing this only by the grace of god.

A serious blow at idealism and clericalism was struck by pre-Marxist materialists who regarded knowledge as a reflection of external objects in man's mind. But their ideas on the process of knowledge were also limited. Being metaphysicists they were unable to apply dialectics to the process of knowledge. They regarded reflection as a passive imprint of a thing on man's brain. The French 18th-century materialist Denis Diderot likened the brain to wax, on which things leave their imprint. Pre-Marxist materialists took no account of the activity, the life of man engaged in cognition. Moreover, their chief limitation lay in their failure to evaluate the role of practice in knowledge.

Marx and Engels, having overcome the limits set by preceding philosophies in understanding the cognitive process, created a qualitatively new, *dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge.*

The fundamental distinction of the Marxist theory of knowledge is that it bases the process of cognition on *practice, the material, production activities of people.* It is in the course of this activity that man comes to know objects and phenomena. In Marxist philosophy practice is both the starting point, the basis of the process of knowledge and the criterion of truth. "The standpoint of life, of practice, should be first and fundamental in the theory of knowledge. And it inevitably leads to materialism,"* Lenin wrote. These questions will be subsequently discussed in greater detail.

From the point of view of dialectical materialism knowledge is an endless process of approximation of thought to the cognised object, the movement of thought from ignorance to knowledge, from incomplete, inexact knowledge, to more complete and more exact. Replacing obsolete theories with new ones, rendering old theories more exact, knowledge marches forward, all the time revealing new sides of reality.

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 141.

Inasmuch as practice serves as the basis of knowledge, let us examine it and see what part it plays in the cognitive process.

### 2. Practice—Starting Point and Basis of the Process of Knowledge

*Practice is the active work of people in transforming nature and society.* The basis of practice is labour, material production. Practice also includes the political side of life, the class struggle, the national-liberation movement and scientific experience, experiments. Practice is social in character. It is the activity not of isolated individuals, but of all working people, the producers of material wealth.

In the course of practice man not only transforms objects existing in nature, but also creates objects which are not available ready-made in nature. Man produces many artificial materials which exceed in durability, beauty and utility anything known to nature.

Practice is the *starting point and basis* of knowledge. Why? First of all because knowledge itself arose on the basis of practice, chiefly under the influence of material production. From the very first steps of his existence man had to work, to win his means of livelihood. In the process of work he came up against the forces of nature and gradually came to understand them. The further development of production demanded new knowledge. Even in antiquity man was faced with the need to measure land areas, to count the number of tools, the products he made. As a result the first rudiments of mathematics appeared. Man erected dwellings, built bridges, roads, irrigation systems and other structures which called for the knowledge of mechanics. Thus, under the influence of practical requirements the cognitive abilities of man gradually developed and gave birth to science. Practice was also behind the birth of the social sciences. Marxism itself, as we know, arose on the foundation of the proletariat's revolutionary struggle.

Practice sets knowledge definite tasks and facilitates their accomplishment, thus advancing knowledge. The practical activities of the collective and state farms in the Soviet Union,

for example, set biological science an important task: to discover ways and means of evolving new high-yield varieties of plants and productive breeds of livestock. This task is being successfully tackled by Soviet biologists and the valuable varieties of plants and breeds of animals they have evolved are widely used in collective and state farms.

Finally, practice provides instruments and equipment for scientific cognition and thereby facilitates the progress of knowledge. Without superpowerful particle accelerators and other very intricate scientific instruments and installations produced by modern industry scientists would not have been able to discover the secrets of the atomic nucleus. We cannot imagine science today without electronic microscopes, space rockets and many other simple and complex instruments of knowledge. All these instruments are in fact the product of the material, practical activities of people.

Practice is not only the basis, but also the *aim* of knowledge. The reason man studies the world around him and learns the laws of its development is to utilise the results of knowledge in his practical activities. It is true that these results are not always applied at once. The disintegration of the atom, for example, was discovered over 50 years ago, but it was only recently that man learned how to use atomic energy for practical purposes. And although often decades pass before scientific discoveries are applied, they are determined, brought into being by the requirements of life.

### *Unity of Theory and Practice*

Cognition is one of the forms of people's activity—it is their *theoretical* activity. But theory in itself is incapable of changing reality and this sets it apart from practice. Theory only reflects the world, generalises mankind's practical activity. But, while generalising practice, theory exerts a reverse influence upon it, contributes to its development. Theory without practice is pointless, practice without theory is blind. Theory indicates the way, helps to find the most efficient means of achieving practical objectives.

Let us take, for example, natural science. It has arisen on the basis of practice, as a result of generalising the experience of people in production, but at the same time it ren-

ders valuable assistance to production. It helps discover new methods of production, create highly efficient machinery and equipment, artificial raw and other materials, and so on.

Marxist-Leninist theory is very important for society's development. Being a correct, deep reflection of reality, a generalisation of the proletariat's revolutionary struggle, it serves as a guide in the proletariat's struggle for socialism and communism. What makes Marxism-Leninism strong is that it is true and, by revealing the laws of social development, it enables us not only to act correctly today, but also to foresee the future, to scientifically plan practical activities for many years ahead. "We Communists," says Nikita Khrushchov, "attach great importance to revolutionary theory, and it is because we are always guided by the Marxist-Leninist teaching that we achieve success. The theory of Marxism-Leninism is our compass, our lodestar."

*Unity of theory and practice is the supreme principle of Marxism-Leninism.* This principle has acquired particularly great significance at the present time when Marxist-Leninist theory has merged with the practice of communist construction, when the accomplishment of practical tasks of building communism at the same time represents the solution of great theoretical problems.

The principle of the unity of theory and practice is most fully embodied in the activities of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In all its work the Party is guided by Marxist-Leninist theory. At the same time it is constantly developing this theory on the basis of new requirements of practice.

The new Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union furnishes a model of the organic unity of theory and practice. The cardinal theoretical propositions put forward in the Programme are a result of generalising the practical experience of socialist and communist construction, while the practical measures mapped out in the Programme are illumined by the theory of Marxism-Leninism and creatively develop this theory. The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. shows that the process of building socialism and communism is at the same time the process of enriching Marxist-Leninist theory on the basis of the practical experience of the people.

## 3. From Living Perception to Abstract Thought

Knowledge does not stand still, but constantly moves and develops. This development of knowledge is expressed in its movement from direct living perception to abstract thought. "From living perception to abstract thought, and *from this to practice*,—such is the dialectical path of the cognition of the *truth*," Lenin wrote.*

### *Sensory Knowledge*

Knowledge always begins with a study of objects of the outside world with the aid of our sense-organs. This we know from our day-to-day experience. If we want to study an unfamiliar object, we first of all carefully examine it, and, if need be, touch it with our fingers, taste it, etc. Direct perception of things is the initial phase, the first step on the road to knowledge. Man, on coming into contact with objects and phenomena of nature during his practical activity, through his sense-organs gains his first impressions of these objects and phenomena. The sense-organs are a kind of a gate through which the outside world "penetrates" into man's consciousness.

Sensation is the main form of sensory knowledge. *Sensation* is a reflection of individual properties, distinctions or sides of an object. Objects can be hot or cold, dark or light, smooth or rough—all these and many other properties, acting on our sense-organs, arouse certain sensations.

Man's organism possesses a corresponding physiological apparatus for the formation of sensations. This apparatus consists firstly of sense-organs, secondly, of nerve fibres through which, just like electricity through wires, excitation is transmitted to the respective parts of the cerebrum and, thirdly, of the sections of the brain where the excitations are transformed into corresponding sensations. Excitation caused by a definite sound in man's ear is transformed into the sensation of sound, while the action of light on the eye is transformed into the sensation of light, and so on.

What makes sensations tremendously important in the

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 171.

process of cognition is that they provide material enabling us to judge an object. The entire subsequent process of knowledge rests on the information about objects which sensations give us.

Lenin defined sensation as a *subjective image of the objective world*. This means that sensation, being a reflection of objectively existing objects, is not their mechanical imprint on man's brain, but is an *ideal image*. This image arises in the consciousness of each *subject* (man) and of course its character is definitely influenced by the personal qualities of man, the degree of development of his sense-organs. Let us consider the following example. Two friends of about the same intellectual development listen to a symphony; the musical ear of one is well developed, and for this reason the orchestra represents to him a rich gamut of sounds which evoke in his mind diverse images, arouse in him different emotions. The other is not endowed with a good ear and the sounds do not particularly impress him, do not arouse even a part of the emotions experienced by his friend. This means that two normal men perceive the same outside influences differently.

Does it not follow from this that sense-organs do not give us a correct idea of the world? Such a view exists in idealist philosophy. Knowing that different people perceive the same reality differently, idealist agnostics claim that the world consists of certain combinations of sensations of the subject, that there are as many worlds as there are people. This is false. In reality our sense-organs do not deceive us. If the indications of one sense-organ arouse doubts, we turn to the others. If a man does not believe his own eyes, he resorts to the use of his fingers, and if this is not enough, he has at his service the eyes and fingers of other people. If, lastly, even this is not enough, man turns to instruments, experiments, practical experience. Thus, sense-organs, checked by each other, by the sensations of other people, by experience, experiment and practice, give us on the whole a correct idea of things accessible to us.

In addition to sensations, sensory knowledge consists of perceptions and ideas. *Perception* is a higher form of sensory knowledge. It reflects an object in its sensory, direct entirety, the total of its external aspects and distinctive features. An *idea* is the reproduction in man's mind of earlier perceptions.

We, for example, can reproduce in our mind, can imagine how an old school friend looks, although we may not have seen him for many years.

### *Logical Knowledge*

The picture given by sense-organs is uncommonly rich and colourful. It is, however, limited and far from complete. Sensory knowledge gives us an idea of external aspects of things. With the aid of sense-organs, for example, it is possible to perceive an electric bulb but it is impossible to imagine that electricity is a stream of electrons moving at a certain velocity. Nor is it possible to perceive, through sense-organs, the tremendous velocity of light, the movement of elementary particles in the atom and many other complex phenomena of nature and social life.

In a word, sensory knowledge cannot reveal the inner nature of things, their essence, the laws of their development. Yet this is the main purpose of knowledge. Only knowledge of laws, of the essence of things can serve man as a guide in his practical activity. It is here that abstract or, as it is also called, logical thought comes to his aid.

*Logical* cognition is a qualitatively new, higher stage in the development of knowledge. Its role is to reveal an object's chief properties and features. It is at the stage of logical thought that man gains knowledge of the laws governing the development of reality, so needed for his practical activity.

Concept is the main form of logical thought. A *concept* reflects in objects not all their aspects, but only what is essential and general; it abstracts, casts aside secondary features. Let us consider, for example, the concept "man". Not all the features of a man are reflected in this concept. It contains no information about the nationality of the man, his age, his place of residence, the time when he lives, and so on. Fixed in this concept is only what is general and essential, inherent in every man—the ability to work, to produce material wealth, to think. Similarly, the concepts "tree", "animal", "class", "production", etc., cover what is general and essential in objects.

Concepts are a result of the prolonged generalising activi-

ty of man's reason, the painstaking processing of a vast mass of data furnished by sensory knowledge. Studying objects with the aid of his sense-organs, man compared them, singling out in them what was general, and abstracting everything secondary, superficial and accidental. Before forming, for example, the concepts of triangle, square and other geometric figures, man in his practical activities came into contact with numerous objectively existing triangular, square and other objects.

Such logical methods as analysis and synthesis are very important in forming concepts. *Analysis* is the mental division of an object or phenomenon into its constituent elements or sides in order to understand the importance of these sides in the phenomenon and single out the essential ones. *Synthesis* is the combining of parts or sides of a phenomenon. It makes it possible to understand the phenomenon in its entirety, in the unity of all its features and properties.

Analysis and synthesis are inseparable in knowledge. Thus, Karl Marx, investigating in *Capital* the capitalist mode of production, first mentally divided it into separate parts (production, circulation, and so on) and studied each one separately. Then, combining the parts studied, he gained a knowledge of capitalism as a whole.

At first glance it might seem that concepts or abstractions are poorer than direct sense-perceptions. Even the simplest concept, however, reflects nature more deeply, fully and truly because it reflects the internal aspects of reality inaccessible to direct sensory cognition. It reflects nature more fully, because it covers not one object or small group of objects, but their mass, their boundless multitude.

The transition from the sensory to the abstract represents a dialectical leap in the process of knowledge, in its movement from the lower to the higher. There is a leap, because man's reason makes the transition from the cognition of phenomena—the outward, superficial in things—to a disclosure of their essence, internal nature. This leap is made through practice. Only the practical activity of people, aimed at transforming objects and phenomena of the world, makes it possible to penetrate their essence, to differentiate between the important and the secondary, the internal and the external. The higher the degree of development of practical

activity, and the more powerful its transforming force, the deeper and more diverse the knowledge of man.

Concepts reflect the changing world, the constantly developing practice, and hence they themselves must be *flexible* and *mobile.* Mobility and flexibility of concepts is expressed in the amplification and deepening of existing concepts and also in the formation of new ones corresponding to the changed objective conditions, the changed practice.

Other forms of thought—judgements and conclusions—are formed on the basis of concepts.

*Judgement* is a form of thought in which something is asserted (for example, "socialism is peace") or something is denied (for example, "Marxism is not a dogma"). As we see, a judgement consists of definite concepts. In the judgements given above these are the concepts "socialism", "peace", "Marxism", "dogma". At the same time it is impossible to understand these concepts without other judgements, such as "socialism is a social system based on public ownership", etc. Concepts and judgements are thus interconnected. Judgements are also interconnected. Their connection makes up a special form of logical thought—conclusion. A *conclusion* is a new judgement obtained on the basis of other judgements (premises). Through conclusions from available knowledge we can gain new knowledge, and this is what makes for their great importance in the process of cognition.

Such higher forms of knowledge as hypothesis and theory represent an intricate combination of concepts, judgements and conclusions. A *hypothesis* is an assumption about phenomena, events, laws. The assumptions about the origin of life on Earth or the origin of the solar system are examples of hypotheses. *Scientific theories* embody deep, all-round knowledge of some definite processes or fields of activity. This type of knowledge has been tested by experiment and practice. So, for example, the modern theory of the atomic nucleus, the theory of relativity in physics, the materialist theory of heredity in biology are all scientific theories. Historical materialism is the scientific theory of the development of society.

Thus we see that knowledge in its dialectical development traverses a long road, from the simplest sensations to complex scientific theories.

Sensory knowledge and abstract thought represent a *unity*: they reflect one and the same material world, and they have a common basis, the practical activity of mankind. Both these stages of knowledge have one physiological basis, man's nervous system.

Abstract thought is impossible without sensory knowledge inasmuch as the information furnished by the sense-organs is the sole material for forming concepts. There can be nothing in thought that is not given to man by his sense-organs. But, having arisen on the basis of sensations, abstract thought goes deeper than sensory knowledge, enriches and extends its bounds. Sensory impressions, illumined by the light of reason, acquire new content. This is obvious from comparing, for example, an engineer's perception of a control panel in a modern electric power plant with the perception of a man who sees this panel for the first time. These instruments mean nothing to the novice, but the specialist, watching the same dials, levers and instruments, learns from their indications everything that is going on in the plant's machinery.

Since the sensory and the logical act in unity, supplementing and enriching each other, neither the indications of the sensations nor the conclusions of reason must be ignored in the process of cognition. Yet in the history of philosophy there have been trends which have understood the process of knowledge in a one-sided manner.

Supporters of *empiricism* underestimate the role of abstract thought in knowledge, maintaining that sense-impressions alone give man a true picture of the world. Since concepts cannot be perceived by the senses (it is impossible, for example, to imagine a "man in general", a "tree in general", and so on), empiricists claim that in reality nothing corresponds to concepts, that they are the product of man's imagination.

In contrast to empiricists, supporters of *rationalism* do not believe the sense-organs and consider reason or abstract thought the sole source of true knowledge. Rationalists underestimate the role of sensory knowledge and assume that man is capable of cognising the world intuitively, without any experience. By divorcing concepts and other forms of thought

from sensations and perceptions, rationalists ultimately lapse into idealism.

It follows that logical knowledge must not be divorced from sensory knowledge because this inevitably leads to a distortion of the cognitive process, to the divorce of thought from reality; this is typical of all trends of idealism. It is the *one-sided exaggeration*, *absolutisation* of one of the aspects of knowledge, their divorce from reality that make up the epistemological* roots of idealism and explain its viability.

Lenin called idealism a sterile flower, but a sterile flower that is not groundless, but grows on the living tree of fertile and powerful human knowledge. The epistemological roots of idealism are contained *within the process of knowledge itself* which, as we have seen, is unusually complex and contradictory.

Knowledge possesses the possibility of deviation, divorce of thought from the cognised object, from reality. This deviation can be seen in the simplest concepts which man uses all the time, such, for example, as a "house in general", a "table in general". In reality there is neither a "house in general" nor a "table in general", but only definite houses, definite tables. The concepts "house", "table", as we know, single out only the general essential features which all houses, all tables have. The moment we forget that concepts have their source in real objects and we divorce them from reality, we can imagine that they have arisen and exist of themselves, independently of the object. This is idealism.

This is how objective idealism arose. Its supporters hold that the concept exists independently of the object; not only that but it "creates" this object. On the other hand, subjective idealists, proceeding from sensations as the direct source of our knowledge, declare that the only thing that exists is these sensations, while they regard objects and phenomena as the sum-total of sensations.

Thus, rectilinearity and one-sidedness, subjectivism and subjective blindness are the epistemological roots of idealism.

It should be noted, however, that the epistemological roots create only the prerequisites, the possibility for idealism to

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* Epistemology (from the Greek *episteme*—knowledge, *logos*—discourse) is the science of knowledge, the theory of knowledge.

exist and that definite social forces turn this possibility into reality. These forces are the reactionary classes interested in a perversion of the truth. It is their class interests that cause them to consolidate the subjectivist, one-sided approach to knowledge, the divorce of thought from reality.

The spread of idealism is also facilitated by the antithesis between mental and manual labour existing in an antagonistic class society giving rise to a seeming independence of the consciousness of men from their material, productive activity. Their monopoly of mental labour enables the exploiting classes to propagate and support idealism in every way and utilise it to justify and maintain their rule.

Idealism has not only epistemological roots, but also *class roots* based on definite interests of the reactionary classes.

And so, knowledge develops from the sensory to the logical through practice. The results of knowledge naturally have to be verified, it is necessary to ascertain whether they are true. It could not be otherwise as only true knowledge can serve the practical requirements of people.

Before describing how the results of knowledge are tested, how truth is reached, let us examine truth.

## 4. The Marxist Understanding of Truth

### *Objectivity of Truth*

Dialectical materialism understands *truth* as that knowledge of an object which *correctly* reflects this object, i.e., *corresponds* to it. For example, the scientific proposition that "bodies consist of atoms", that the "Earth existed prior to man", that "the people are the makers of history", etc., are true.

On what does truth depend? Does it depend on man, in whose mind this truth arises, or on the object it reflects?

Idealists hold that truth is subjective, that it depends on man who himself determines the truth of his knowledge without regard for the real state of affairs. "Man is the measure of all things"—this is how the idealist interpretation of truth was formulated in the days of antiquity by the Greek philosopher Protagoras.

In contrast to idealism, dialectical materialism maintains

that truth is *objective*. Since truth reflects the objectively existing world, its content does not depend on man's consciousness. Objective truth, Lenin wrote, is the content of our knowledge which depends neither on man nor on mankind. The content of truth is fully determined by the objective processes it reflects.

Let us consider, for example, the statement: "The Earth is shaped like a sphere". This assertion is true inasmuch as it corresponds to reality. But does the shape of the Earth depend on man's consciousness? Not in the least; the Earth existed long before man, and its spherical form was shaped by natural forces. Examining any other truth, we arrive at a similar conclusion.

### *From Relative to Absolute Truth*

Recognising the objectivity of truth, dialectical materialism also solves another important problem of knowledge: *how* man cognises objective truth—at once, completely, unconditionally, absolutely or only approximately, relatively. This question concerns the relation of absolute and relative truth.

The distinctions between absolute and relative truth are determined by the varying degree of correspondence of man's knowledge to reality. Some knowledge fully corresponds to reality, with absolute exactness, other knowledge only partially. *Absolute truth* is objective truth in its entirety, an absolutely exact reflection of reality.

Is it possible to cognise absolute truth in its entirety? In principle, yes, since, on the one hand, nothing is unknowable while, on the other, there are no bounds to the cognitive abilities of man's reason.

An individual, or a particular generation of people, however, is limited in knowledge by the corresponding historical conditions, the level of development of production, science and experimental techniques. That is why man's knowledge at each stage of history is relative; it inevitably assumes the character of relative truth. *Relative truth* is the incomplete correspondence of knowledge to reality. Lenin called this truth the *relatively true* reflection of an object which is independent of man. Corresponding to reality in essence,

this knowledge needs to be further specified, deepened and tested in practice.

That being the case, perhaps absolute truth is unknowable in general? It is knowable. It is impossible to cognise absolute truth at once, in its entirety; it can only be reached in the endless process of knowledge. With each new achievement of science man draws closer to the cognition of absolute truth, to knowing its new elements, links and sides. Knowledge progresses because man, by cognising relative truth, cognises absolute truth as well.

Let us take as an example the modern theory of the atom. In the main, it corresponds to reality, but as a whole it is nevertheless relative truth. We cannot say that man knows absolutely everything about the atom. So many secrets are still hidden in the atom that the efforts of more than one generation of scientists are required to uncover them. Science has to solve the very intricate problem of the internal structure of elementary particles which make up the atom, the causes of their changes, transmutations and many other problems. At the same time the atomic theory contains grains of absolute truth, complete, absolutely exact knowledge; what science has learned about the existence of the atom, of its nucleus with tremendous latent reserves of energy and numerous mobile and variable particles, etc., is absolute, non-transient knowledge.

This means that relative truth must also contain grains of absolute truth. Man's knowledge is *both* absolute and relative: relative because it is not exhaustive and can be endlessly developed and deepened, revealing new sides of reality; absolute, because it contains elements of eternal, absolutely exact knowledge.

Man has gained many ideas about individual sides of reality which are of a non-transient, absolute character. Such, for example, are the propositions of Marxist philosophy "matter is primary, consciousness is secondary", "consciousness is a property of the brain", and other laws and conclusions of the natural and social sciences. The fundamental theses of Marxist-Leninist theory, the correctness of which has been confirmed by practice, are absolute truth. Although Marxist-Leninist theory is constantly developing, its basic principles cannot be refuted.

"Human thought," Lenin wrote, "... by its nature is capable of giving, and does give, absolute truth, which is compounded of a sum-total of relative truths. Each step in the development of science adds new grains to the sum of absolute truth, but the limits of the truth of each scientific proposition are relative, now expanding, now shrinking with the growth of knowledge."*

Man has penetrated the innermost depths of the atom and has placed at his service its mighty, truly inexhaustible forces. The harnessed atom generates electricity, rotates the shafts of atomic ships, helps in the treatment of diseases and performs many other useful services.

Man is gradually extending his power over the boundless expanse of the Universe. Through his reason he penetrates matter deeply and extensively, discovering new secrets of outer space. Only three or four years ago it was thought that outer space is a void illuminated only by the faint light of distant stars and penetrated by rare meteorites. Now, as a result of space research we know that the Earth is girded by belts of charged particles. Information has been received about the upper layers of the atmosphere, their composition and density, cosmic rays and micro-meteorites, the tiny particles of interplanetary substance.

Mankind's age-old dream, the exploration of the Cosmos, is now being realised. The time is not far distant when man will travel to the Moon and to other planets and new invaluable grains of knowledge will be added to the infinite sum of absolute truth.

### *Concreteness of Truth*

According to dialectical materialism, truth gained in the process of knowledge is always related to a definite, concrete sphere of reality which likewise develops in definite conditions. There is no abstract truth, *truth is always concrete*.

Is classical mechanics, for example, true? Yes, it is true, but only in definite, concrete spheres of reality, not in all of them. It correctly reflects the movement of macroscopic bodies, but loses its true character in the micro-world. The

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 135.

new, quantum mechanics is true here. And this is the case with any other truth: in correctly reflecting certain concrete phenomena, it is unable to reflect others correctly.

Even for one and the same process, however, truth cannot be eternal or fixed once and for all. This process itself develops, the conditions in which it takes place change and naturally the truth reflecting it also undergoes change. What was true in certain conditions may become untrue in other, changed conditions.

The principle that truth is concrete is particularly important in the present-day situation for the successful struggle of the peoples for peace, democracy and socialism. This principle demands above all a correct understanding of the contemporary epoch. The main content of our epoch is the transition from capitalism to socialism, when the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in mankind's development. It is on the basis of these fundamental characteristics of our epoch that Marxist parties solve the fundamental issues of our time: war and peace, peaceful coexistence of states with different systems and prospects of the struggle for socialism.

Let us take such a cardinal issue of our age as the question of war and peace.

An analysis of the reactionary essence of imperialism brought Lenin to the conclusion that under imperialism wars are inevitable. He based his conclusion on the existing situation: the imperialists ruled the world, had divided it among themselves and were engaged in a relentless battle for its re-division. In Lenin's lifetime there was no world socialist system, but even then he predicted that mankind would inevitably be faced with the historic task of turning the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national phenomenon existing in one country into an international one, into a dictatorship of the proletariat existing in at least several countries and capable of exerting influence on all world development.

Lenin called for a dialectical approach to the question of wars, i.e., for strict account of the concrete historical situation, changes in the correlation of forces in the world. This correlation of forces has now radically changed in favour of peace and socialism. A world socialist system has arisen and is vigorously developing, there is a widespread move-

ment of the people for peace, headed by the working class, the most implacable foe of aggressive wars, the number of peace-loving non-socialist states is growing.

All this taken together has given the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and other Marxist parties grounds for concluding that at present war is not inevitable and that conditions exist for preventing war.

Dogmatists and sectarians are attacking this creative, genuinely Marxist solution of the problem of war and peace. They ignore the new conditions and cling to obsolete conclusions and propositions. Divorced from concrete reality, refusing to see the new correlation of forces in the world, they declare that today wars are still inevitable. By denying the possibility of preventing another world war, dogmatists thereby exert a demoralising influence on the working people. Indeed, is it worth building a new life, if it will be later consumed in the flames of an atomic war?

Marxist-Leninist parties condemn dogmatism and sectarianism, and in all activities they consistently apply the principle of a concrete, historical approach to reality.

### 5. Practice — Criterion of Truth

To find a criterion of truth means to find the objective basis which does not depend on man and makes it possible to distinguish truth, true knowledge, from delusion.

*Practice is the sole criterion of truth.* We can argue as much as we like about the true character of any idea or scientific theory, but this dispute can only be settled by practice, i. e., in economic production, political life or scientific experiment. "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a *practical* question," Marx wrote. "In practice man must prove the truth, that is the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking."*

Idealists of the most diverse trends disagree with this important proposition of dialectical materialism. They deny the importance of practice in knowledge and maintain that man himself, his thought, is the criterion of truth. What is

* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, p. 403.

useful, what is beneficial is true—this idea is asserted, for example, by *pragmatists*, representatives of a trend in idealist philosophy which is especially widespread in the United States. Such an understanding of truth leads pragmatists to justify the reactionary actions of contemporary capitalism. Since the exploitation of the workers, imperialist war and plunder of less developed countries are of benefit, bring profit to the capitalists, these phenomena, from the pragmatist viewpoint, are true and natural.

Usefulness, however, cannot serve as a criterion of truth. On the contrary, only true knowledge brings benefit to mankind.

Man can rely in his practical work only on true knowledge; only truth can bring him the results he expects. Therefore, if man, acting on the knowledge gained, reaches during his practical activity the aim he set himself, obtains the expected results, this signifies that his knowledge corresponds to reality, is true.

Here is one example. More than half a century ago, the Russian scientist Konstantin Tsiolkovsky developed the scientific theory of rocketry. He expressed the unusually bold idea, a truly fantastic idea at that time, that rockets could be used for flights to other celestial bodies.

Great efforts and resources were required to turn Tsiolkovsky's ideas into reality. However, on September 14, 1959, the second Soviet space rocket reached the Moon. A flight from the Earth to another celestial body was thus made for the first time, thereby confirming Tsiolkovsky's idea. "Man will take a rock from the Moon," Tsiolkovsky forecast half a century ago. Now that Soviet cosmonauts have made the first flights into outer space it will not be long before the great scientist's bold dream comes true.

Social theories and ideas too are tested in practice, in the revolutionary struggle of classes, the political activities of states, of various parties, in the struggle of the peoples for peace and progress. The truth of the Marxist-Leninist theory is being confirmed by life itself, by the practical activities of the international communist movement. The irrepressible movement of mankind from capitalism to communism offers incontrovertible proof of the great vital force, the great truth of the teaching of Marxism-Leninism.

*PART TWO*

# HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

*Chapters X-XIX*

*CHAPTER X*

# HISTORICAL MATERIALISM: WHAT IT STUDIES

Marx and Engels revealed the dialectical-materialist character of development not only of nature but also of *society*, creating thereby the scientific theory of social development, *historical materialism*. We now go on to explain what historical materialism is.

First of all, let us ascertain the nature of the revolution made by Marxism in the views on society.

## 1. The Rise of Historical Materialism — a Revolution in the Views on Society

Intelligent people long ago pondered over questions about society. How does human society develop? What are its driving forces? Are the changes in society accidental or are they dictated by necessity, by objective laws? If society's development is causally conditioned, what is the chief cause, the foundation of social life? It was natural that these and many similar questions arose, for man lives in society, is bound to it by countless threads, and cannot but take an interest in the fate of society, the ways in which it develops.

Many correct ideas about social development had been expressed by scholars even before Marxism. The French 18th-century materialists, for example, asserted that man, his views and behaviour are a result of the influence of social environment. French bourgeois historians (Guizot, Thierry, Mignet) pointed to the existence of opposite classes and the class struggle in society. The British bourgeois economists

(Adam Smith, David Ricardo) tried to find in economic life a basis for the existence of classes. The Utopian Socialists (Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen) anticipated individual features of future communist society.

A big contribution to the theory of social development was made by Belinsky, Herzen, Chernyshevsky and other Russian revolutionary democrats of the 19th century. Their ideas about the role of economic life in social development, about the people as the makers of history, the irreconcilability of the class interests of the exploited and the exploiters, the class character of philosophy, literature, art, and so on, were profound for their time.

Nevertheless pre-Marxist *sociology* * was not scientific. What were its main failings?

To begin with, prior to Marx idealism reigned supreme in sociology. The French materialists, having indicated the influence of the social environment on man, erroneously regarded this environment as the product of human reason. "Ideas rule the world"—this was the epitome of their views on society.

Other pre-Marxist materialists likewise had an idealist view on society. And the unscientific nature of the idealists' views on social development is self-evident. Hegel, although he made a valuable contribution to philosophy by his ideas on historical necessity and although he attempted to view the history of mankind dialectically, ultimately arrived at the false conclusion that society is ruled by divine will. "God rules the world. The content of his rule, the realisation of his plans constitute world history." This sums up Hegelian philosophy of history.

Another shortcoming in pre-Marxist sociology also stemmed from the approach to society in an idealist way. Pre-Marxist sociologists, acting on the premise that ideas rule the world and that these ideas are fathered by outstanding individuals—kings, military leaders, scholars, etc., arrived at the wrong conclusion that these great men alone make history. They did not see the decisive role played by the working people in historical development.

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* Sociology (from the Latin *societas*—society and the Greek *logos*—discourse) is the science of society.

Pre-Marxist sociology also proved incapable of revealing the dialectics of the historical process. In the presentation of these sociologists history appeared as a conglomeration of unconnected facts. Being idealists they were unable to grasp the unity and interconnections of social life, the real driving forces and material sources behind historical events.

Only Marx and Engels proved capable of penetrating the nature of society and fully revealing its complex and contradictory development. They overcame the shortcomings of the old sociology and created a qualitatively new theory of social development, historical materialism, thereby making a revolution in the views on society.

What is the substance of this revolution?

Marx and Engels drove idealism from social science. They correctly solved the fundamental question of philosophy as applied to society and formulated the principal postulate of historical materialism: *social being determines social consciousness.*

What is social being and social consciousness?

The sphere of *social being* encompasses the material life of society, and above all people's productive activity, the economic relations between them in the process of production. *Social consciousness* is the spiritual life of people, the ideas, theories and views which guide them in what they do.

In asserting that social being is primary and social consciousness secondary, Marx and Engels acted on the premise that before people can engage in science, art, philosophy, and so on they must get food, clothing and shelter, for which they must work, produce material wealth. From this it follows that "the production of the immediate material means of subsistence and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of *vice versa*, as had hitherto been the case".* Historical materialism is a genuinely scientific, *materialist* understanding of history.

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* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, p. 167.

Marx and Engels, by singling out from the numerous social relations the economic, production relations as the chief, decisive ones, arrived at the concept of the *socio-economic formation*, a fundamental concept of historical materialism.

The socio-economic formation is the sum-total of social phenomena and processes (relating to the economy, ideology, family, way of life, etc.), based on a certain type of production, economic relations between people. Society develops through the natural replacement of one socio-economic formation by another, more improved. History has progressed from the primitive-communal formation to the slave formation, from the slave to the feudal, to the capitalist and, lastly, to the communist formation.

Marx and Engels proved that *the masses. the working people*, are the *real makers of history*. The people by their labour produce all the material wealth. The labour of millions of ordinary men and women constitutes the indispensable foundation of mankind's life and progress.

Marx and Engels overcame the metaphysical nature of the old sociology and revealed the objective dialectics of social development. As a result history ceased to be a chaotic conglomeration of unconnected facts, and appeared as an integral and harmonious process governed by dialectical laws.

### 2. The Subject Matter of Historical Materialism

The subject matter of historical materialism is the study of society and the laws of its development.

These laws are as *objective*, i.e., independent of man's consciousness, as the laws of nature's development. Like the laws of nature, they are *knowable* and are applied by man in his practical activity. There are, however, essential distinctions between the laws of social life and the laws of nature. The laws of nature reflect the operation of blind, spontaneous forces, while the laws of social development are always manifested through people acting as intelligent beings who set themselves definite aims and work to achieve them.

The laws of social life are studied not only by historical materialism, but also by the other social sciences: political

economy, history, aesthetics, pedagogics, and so on. But all these sciences study a certain group of social phenomena, examine society from one angle, without giving an idea of the process of social development as a whole. Political economy, for example, studies the economic, production relations between people. History is concerned with society's development in different epochs and in different countries. Aesthetics is confined to the sphere of art, and so on.

In contrast to the social sciences, historical materialism studies the *most general* laws of social development. As an integral part of the Marxist-Leninist world outlook, historical materialism furnishes a scientific, dialectical-materialist interpretation of phenomena of social life. It solves such important general problems of historical development as the connection between social being and social consciousness, the importance of material production in people's lives, the origin and role of social ideas and of their corresponding institutions. Historical materialism enables us to understand what role the people and individuals play in history, how classes and the class struggle arose, how the state appeared, why social revolutions occur and what is their significance in the historical process, and a number of other general problems of social development.

Not all the laws studied by historical materialism have the same sphere of operation. Some of them operate at all stages and others at particular stages of society's development. Among the former are the law of the determining role of social being in relation to social consciousness and the law of the determining role of the mode of production in society's development. Among the latter is the law of the class struggle which only operates in societies divided into hostile classes.

At the present time special importance is attached to the laws relating to the rise and development of communist society, such as the laws governing the transition from capitalism to socialism, the development of socialism into communism, etc.

Historical materialism also elaborates the corresponding categories or concepts which reflect the most general and essential aspects of social development. These include "social being", "social consciousness", "mode of production",

"basis" and "superstructure". Only the sum-total of the laws and categories of historical materialism furnishes a single and harmonious picture of social development.

Historical materialism arose as a result of generalising people's practical experience throughout history and the achievements of the social sciences, and it is absolutely inconceivable outside of them. Without historical materialism, without a knowledge of the general laws of social development no social science can develop fruitfully. Historical materialism is the *methodological foundation* of all the other social sciences. It enables historians, economists and other scholars to find their way in the intricate maze of social phenomena and to determine the place and significance of each phenomenon in social life. Knowing, for example, the decisive role of the people in social development, a historian can bring out the genuine character of a particular historical event. Knowing that society's spiritual life depends on economic, material relations between people, a historian can trace the sources of various theories and views and correctly assess their role in history.

In the same way historical materialism is very important for the other social sciences.

Knowledge of the laws of historical materialism enables us not only to understand involved social phenomena, but also to *influence* social life, to *transform* it in the interests of the working people. To transform reality on the basis of the laws of social development means to give effect to the historical necessity of mankind's progressive development. In the process of this development mankind gains genuine freedom. Let us examine what historical materialism understands by necessity and freedom.

## 3. Historical Necessity and Human Freedom

*Historical necessity* is that which naturally follows from the *internal connection* of social phenomena and therefore *is bound* to take place. Material production, for example, necessarily determines all aspects of social life. Social revolutions or the succession of one social order by another also take place of necessity.

Reactionary bourgeois sociologists and churchmen do not recognise historical necessity. Religious preachers claim that the entire historical process is predetermined by divine will, and that people are mere playthings in the hands of providence. The Bible says that without God's will not a single hair will fall from man's head.

In distorting the essence of social development and rejecting historical necessity, reactionary bourgeois sociologists go to the other extreme and advocate subjectivism, the reign of arbitrary will in social activity. In their opinion, the behaviour or actions of people are neither determined by anything nor depend on anything. At the same time bourgeois sociologists accuse Marxists of fatalism, of worshipping historical necessity and claiming that man is impotent in the face of social laws.

Because of their class limitations the ideologists of the bourgeoisie stubbornly refuse to understand that historical necessity, far from precluding, presupposes people's conscious activity. Men are unable to abolish the laws of social development or to create new laws, but they are capable of understanding these laws and historical necessity, and, through being aware of necessity, to actively intervene in the historical process. Practical experience has conclusively shown that, by understanding objective necessity, people subordinate to their will not only the laws of nature, as witnessed by the achievements of modern science and technology, but also the course of social events. *It is knowledge of objective necessity and its employment in the interest of man that constitute human freedom.*

Freedom does not abolish objective necessity, it signifies that man understands necessity and exploits necessity for his own ends. Man's activity is only free when it corresponds to objective necessity and his freedom consists not in imaginary independence from the laws of nature and society, but in knowledge of these laws and the ability to make them serve human needs.

Freedom is the result of prolonged historical development. As science and production progressed man began to bring nature under his control, learned its objective laws and thereby gradually subordinated necessity operating in nature to his will and became free in relation of nature. Man's domina-

tion over nature, however, does not give him control over social processes. Historical necessity, the law-governed development of pre-socialist societies, acted as a spontaneous force which people were unable to master. Under capitalism, for example, the law of anarchy and competition makes man a pawn in the hands of chance and does not give him the opportunity to plan his activity in advance.

It is only socialism that for the first time creates the possibility of mastering historical necessity and achieving genuine freedom. The socialist revolution makes public ownership predominant and removes class antagonisms, as a result of which people become able to consciously direct the life of society. With the victory of socialism society makes a tremendous leap from the kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of freedom. Moreover, as society advances to communism, man's freedom becomes wider and more diverse, his domination over nature and the social processes grows, and he learns to combine his personal interests and aspirations with the lofty ideals of society.

An indispensable condition for the growth of genuine freedom in society is the conscious productive and political activities of the people, based on the knowledge and competent application of Marxist-Leninist theory.

The Marxist-Leninist theory of necessity and freedom has been applied in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Genuine freedom has struck root here finally and irrevocably. It has been attained as a result of the triumphant socialist revolution, the heroic labour and selfless effort of the peoples. Having become masters of their country, having understood historical necessity, the peoples have gained boundless opportunities to make their own history consciously and purposively.

The attainment of freedom under socialism, however, does not rule out the operation of historical necessity, of objective laws. Under socialism too necessity constitutes the objective basis for man's free activity, and objective laws operate, but these laws are consciously used by the people.

## 4. The Unscientific Nature of Contemporary Bourgeois Sociology

Historical materialism, the scientific theory of social development indicating man's true road to a better future, is hated by the reactionary bourgeoisie and their ideologists. Gripped with fear of the future and unable to prevent the inavertible advance of mankind to communism, the bourgeoisie seeks at least to retard historical progress and prolong the existence of the capitalist system. To this end they resort to all possible means—economic, political and ideological. Contemporary bourgeois sociology holds an important place among their ideological weapons.

There is an endless number of trends and schools of this sociology but they all stem from the same idealistic and metaphysical root.

### *Renunciation of the Objective Laws of Social Development*

The most characteristic feature of contemporary bourgeois sociology is the rejection of the objective laws of social development. This rejection assumes the most diverse forms in different sociological trends.

The group of undisguised idealists says, without mincing words, that no historical laws exist, that history is an unknowable realm of chaos and chance.

Proponents of the *psychological* school see the basis of social development in psychological factors—the wishes, will and instincts of man. In their opinion, the cause of social disorder and the suffering of the working people in capitalist society is rooted not in the objective laws of capitalism, not in private capitalist ownership, but in the imperfection of the worker's mentality. Perfection of mentality, and not the abolition of capitalism, is the remedy offered by psycho-sociologists for curing major social ills.

The *biological* school favours scientific sociology in words, but in fact substitutes biological laws for the genuine laws of social development and places man on a level with animals blindly fighting for existence. An attempt is made to justify, by "natural" laws, exploitation, predatory wars, colonialism, racialism and other ugly features of capitalism.

Bio-sociologists refuse to understand that the laws of social development cannot be reduced to biological laws because society develops according to its own specific laws, which qualitatively differ from the laws of development of animals and plants. Lenin described attempts to identify the laws of social development with the laws of nature as the easiest but most barren, scholastic and futile occupation.

Rejection of the major laws of social development is also typical of *micro-sociology*, or, as it is also called, *empirical sociology*. Micro-sociologists do not openly reject knowledge of social life, but in the intricate chain of social phenomena they study only petty facts of capitalist reality, not wishing to see behind them the internal laws of society's development. This, in effect, signifies a renunciation of science and of the solution of the basic social problems of our time.

Refusal to recognise the laws of social development is nothing but an attempt to clear the way in social life for religious faith. It is no accident that many bourgeois sociologists maintain that the historical process is predestined by God. The English historian Arnold Toynbee writes that the aim of history is to set up the kingdom of God and history is "God revealing himself".

By rejecting the law-governed character of social development, many bourgeois ideologists thereby distort the real course of history, embellish capitalism and attempt to justify its reactionary domestic and foreign policies.

### *Rejection of Social Progress*

The unscientific nature of contemporary bourgeois sociology is also manifested in the rejection of historical progress and society's advance.

In this connection it should be noted that the views of sociologists on the character of the historical process have undergone important changes. When the emerging capitalist class was fighting for power, bourgeois progressives had a lot to say about social progress. The idea of progress served the bourgeoisie as a weapon for breaking up the old feudal system and establishing the more progressive capitalist society. But once the capitalist class came to power its under-

standing of social progress became amazingly one-sided. The ideologists of the bourgeoisie began to praise the capitalist order to the skies and to hold it up as the eternal kingdom of freedom and justice, an embodiment of the ideals of progress. Bourgeois sociologists declare that the aim of social progress has been attained and that there is no further road ahead. It is fear of the future which holds out nothing for capitalism except doom, and fear of the new, communist world that makes them deny progress.

Contemporary bourgeois sociologists put up in contrast to the concepts of "progress" and "development" the term "social change" which they apply to numerous secondary processes that take place in society and do not exert any noticeable influence on the course of history. They want thereby to divert attention from the radical, revolutionary changes that are now taking place in society, to belittle their significance, and also to avoid solving the burning social problem of our age.

Renunciation of the idea of social progress by bourgeois sociologists is also manifested in the numerous theories of the "cycle", "stagnation" and "regress" of society which they are now assiduously spreading.

In the 1920s, the "cycle" theory was preached by the ideologist of German imperialism, Oswald Spengler. In his book *The Decline of the West* he sought to prove that society is unable to escape the "vicious circle" in which the selfsame three stages are invariably repeated: rise, apex and decline. In Spengler's opinion, capitalism is the apex of civilisation and culture. With its decline mankind will inevitably revert to barbarism. From this follows the idea that it is futile to fight capitalism (why change the best for the worst?) and there is no need for the proletarian revolution and socialism, which is alleged to be generally impossible since society cannot arrive at something new.

In recent years the reactionary theory of the "historical cycle" has been revived by Arnold Toynbee who rejects the universal progressive development of society, contemptuously calling it an "illusion of progress".

Is there any artifice which the learned servants of the bourgeoisie have not employed to justify the capitalist system! Their arsenal is stocked with slander against socialism and

Marxism-Leninism, boundless praise for capitalism and false statements about "people's capitalism", the "welfare state", and so on. But no matter how the apologists for imperialism twist and turn, history conclusively demonstrates the great truth of Marxism-Leninism.

Science and society's experience throughout history refute the views of bourgeois sociologists and demonstrate that the development of society is a forward, natural, historical process which follows objective laws independent of man. The history of society is an endless chain of development, revolutionary transitions from the simpler, lower formations to more complex, higher ones. Social progress depends on the development and improvement of material production. Production has developed from the simplest tools, the sticks and stones man used in his struggle for life, to the latest automatic machines and equipment driven by electric power and atomic energy. As production advances, the other spheres of social life also develop.

*CHAPTER XI*

# MODE OF PRODUCTION — THE MATERIAL FOUNDATION OF SOCIETY'S LIFE

The crux of historical materialism is the proposition that the mode of production plays the decisive part in society's development. But production can only take place if there are definite requisites: a geographical environment and population. Let us examine these requisites and ascertain their importance in social life.

## 1. The Role of the Geographical Environment and Population in Society's Development

### *The Geographical Environment and Society*

The *geographical environment* is man's natural surroundings, i.e., the climate and soil, rivers and seas, flora and fauna, terrain, minerals, etc.

The geographical environment is a *necessary condition* for man's productive activity. Labour is inconceivable without struggle against, and action upon, nature from which man gains his means of subsistence.

The geographical environment can exert a dual influence on the development of society. Favourable natural conditions (mineral resources, forests, rivers, a good climate, etc.) promote society's development. On the other hand, unfavourable natural conditions adversely affect social development. The absence of minerals, for example, impedes industrial development; an arid climate hinders the progress of agriculture, etc.

Acting on the importance of the geographical environment in social development, proponents of the *geographical trend*

in sociology overestimate its role and claim that social development is determined either by the environment as a whole or by some of its elements—the climate, rivers, etc.

In the imperialist era the geographical trend has emerged in a number of capitalist countries in the garb of geopolitics. This is a pseudo-scientific theory which attempts to justify the aggressive policy of the imperialist powers. In Nazi Germany the theorists of geopolitics advanced the demand for *Lebensraum* for the Germans, providing the "theoretical foundation" for the claims of German fascism to world domination and attempting to justify its piratical policy of war and enslavement of other nations.

The geographical trend has no scientific basis. It does not and cannot explain the causes of social development or explain why, for example, two such neighbours as Czechoslovakia and Austria, which have developed in approximately the same geographical conditions, stand at different levels of social organisation. In Czechoslovakia socialism has already been built, while Austria remains a bourgeois state. Nor does the geographical trend take into account that the geographical environment develops much more slowly than social life and consequently cannot determine social development. The natural conditions in the Soviet Union have remained practically unchanged in the last hundred years, but during this period the feudal system gave way to capitalism, which in turn was succeeded by socialism, and now the Soviet people are building communism.

From this it follows that the geographical environment is not the determining factor in society's development, although it is a necessary condition of social life. It is only capable of facilitating or retarding society's development.

### *Population and Society*

*Population* is another necessary condition for the material life of society. Production is impossible without people, whose labour constitutes the mighty force which subjugates nature and puts it to the service of man. In certain conditions, therefore, a large or small population and a high or low growth rate can accelerate or slow down a country's development. Large manpower resources and high population

growth rate are undoubtedly an important factor in the Soviet Union's great successes.

But does population play a decisive part in society's development? If it does, why is it that Pakistan, for example, with a population density of over 90 people per square kilometre, has lagged economically so far behind the United States with a population density of only about 23 people per square kilometre? How are we to explain that the Soviet Union, whose population density is below that of the United States, has considerably outstripped the latter in social and political development?

This means that population density and growth are not factors determining society's progress. On the contrary, they themselves depend on the character of a social system. The Soviet Union, for example, has a very high population growth rate and the lowest mortality rate in the world. This follows from the essence of socialism and is a result of the great concern that socialist society shows for the welfare of the people.

Nevertheless, supporters of *malthusianism*, a reactionary trend in bourgeois sociology, base themselves on the assumption that it is the growth of population that determines the course of social development. The father of this theory, the English clergyman and economist Thomas Malthus, at the end of the 18th century announced his "discovery" of the "universal principle" that the means of subsistence grow in arithmetical progression, while the population grows in geometrical progression and that this is the cause of the poverty, starvation, unemployment and other suffering which afflict the working people. Malthus also proposed a "way" to get rid of these evils—the poor should abstain from marrying and from having children.

Malthus needed the pseudo-scientific "theory" of population to exonerate capitalism, to justify the hardships capitalism inflicts on the working people. Malthusianism is now used by the imperialist bourgeoisie not only to explain the deep contradictions in imperialism, but also to justify their predatory foreign policy. Present-day malthusianism has become openly misanthropic: it no longer confines itself to advice on refraining from marriage and on exercising birth control, but proposes that H-bombs, germ warfare and

other monstrous means of destruction be used to do away with the "superfluous" mouths.

Science and practical experience refuted malthusianism long ago. Marx proved that the causes of the working people's poverty and starvation under capitalism are rooted not in the natural laws of population, but in the very essence of the capitalist system, in the extremely unjust distribution of material wealth. The lion's share of this wealth is appropriated by the capitalists, while the working people are often deprived of even the most essential means of subsistence. Malthusianism has been conclusively refuted by the economic progress of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries where capitalism has been abolished, and starvation, poverty and unemployment have been banished for all time, where man's life is becoming increasingly secure and prosperous.

Neither the geographical environment nor the population are the determining factors in social development. The determining factor is the mode of production of material wealth, which we shall now examine.

## 2. Mode of Production. Productive Forces and Relations of Production

People cannot exist without food, clothing, shelter and other necessities of life. Nature, however, does not provide these things ready-made; to produce them people must work. Labour is therefore the basis of social life, a natural necessity for man. Without labour, without productive activity human life itself would be impossible. *The production of material wealth* is consequently the chief, determining factor in social development.

### *Productive Forces*

In the labour process people transform natural objects to satisfy their needs. To make a machine, for example, iron ore is mined, smelted, converted into steel and then treated accordingly.

Material production is impossible without the objects and means of labour.

*Objects of labour* are the things to which human labour is applied. *Means of labour* are the machines, equipment, tools, production buildings, transport and so on. The objects and means of labour constitute the *means of production.*

*Instruments of production*, with which people act on objects of labour and transform them, are the most important means of labour. Production is inconceivable without instruments of labour as nature does not willingly part with its riches and they cannot be wrested by brawn alone. Man can only gain his means of livelihood with the aid of these instruments and the better they are, the greater means of livelihood he gets.

Instruments of labour by themselves, however, do not produce material wealth. They must not only be made, but also be put to use. The most perfect machine will eventually turn into a useless pile of metal if no human hand touches it. Only man is capable of setting a tool into motion and organising material production. That is why he is an essential element of production.

*The productive forces* are the means of production, and above all the instruments of labour, created by society, plus the people who produce the material wealth. The productive forces determine the relations of man to nature and his power over it. *The working people* are the principal element of the productive forces. People's constructive labour sets in motion the tools they have devised and makes these implements give mankind the immeasurable quantities of the means of subsistence needed.

### *Relations of Production*

Productive forces are not the only factors in material production. People can only produce jointly by organising in a society. That is why labour is and always has been social in character. "In order to produce," Marx wrote, "they (people—*V. A.*) enter into definite connections and relations with one another and only within these social connections and relations does their action on nature, does production take place."*

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* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1955, p. 89.

People's relations in the production process constitute the relations of production, which are an integral part of material production. A certain historical *mode of production*, therefore, appears as the *unbreakable unity* between the productive forces and the corresponding relations of production.

People were connected by labour at the dawn of primitive society. In nomad hunting tribes, for example, this connection was that of fellow-hunters. As the productive forces and the division of labour grew, the relations between people became more and more diverse. Connections were established between crop growers and herdsmen, peasants and craftsmen, craftsmen and merchants, etc. With the development of the machine industry, the connections between the producers became especially diverse and many-sided.

Relations of production are based on the *form of ownership*, i.e., the relation of people to the means of production—the land, its mineral resources, forests, waters, raw materials, factory buildings, instruments of labour and so on. On the form of ownership depends the dominating or subordinate *position of various social groups in production*, their relationship in the production process or, as Marx put it, the mutual exchange of their activity. If property is publicly owned (the means of production belong to the working people), relations of production assume the nature of co-operation and mutual assistance between people free from exploitation, as is the case under socialism. If property is privately owned (the means of production belong to the exploiting minority) the relations of production are relations of domination and subordination characteristic, for example, of capitalism. They cannot be otherwise, since the working people in an antagonistic class society are deprived of the means of production and are forced to work for the exploiters who own these means.

The *form of distribution* also depends on the nature of the ownership of the means of production. Private capitalist ownership determines the extremely unjust distribution of society's material wealth under capitalism. The owner of the means of production receives most of the wealth produced, although he himself does not take a direct part in production. Public ownership in socialist society ensures the

principle of distribution according to work, which meets the interests of all the working people. Under socialism all the material wealth produced belongs to the people.

The sphere of production relations encompasses the forms of ownership of the means of production and also the consequent position of the various social groups in production and the forms of distribution of material wealth.

Relations of production are formed *objectively*, independent of people's will and desire. Definite relations between people in the production process only arise if the productive forces, to which these relations correspond, have matured.

The mode of production develops by virtue of its own causes, its intrinsic dialectics. Let us see what are these causes, what is the internal dialectics of the development of production.

### 3. Dialectics of the Productive Forces and Relations of Production

Production does not stand still, it constantly grows, develops and improves. It could not be otherwise for in order to live people must produce material wealth, and produce it on a growing scale. This is necessary because the number of people on our planet is continuously growing and their requirements are increasing all the time. Primitive man needed very little: coarse food, an animal skin, a roof over his head and a fire burning in his hearth. But the material and cultural needs of the man of today are very great.

The only way to satisfy the increasing needs of the ever growing number of people is to constantly expand and improve production. *Development of production is an objective necessity, a law of social life.* The history of society is the law-governed development of social production, the necessary process of replacing one, lower mode of production by another, higher one.

How does production develop?

The development of production begins with a change in the productive forces. But the productive forces, as we have learned, are both instruments of production and the people who utilise these instruments. Which of these elements of the

productive forces develops first? History shows that within the framework of the productive forces the instruments of production develop first. To lighten labour, to obtain more material wealth with the least expenditure of labour people constantly improve the existing instruments and devise new and more efficient ones.

The development and improvement of the instruments of production, technical progress, are a result of the work of the people engaged in production. But together with improvement of the instruments of labour, people themselves develop. Their production know-how and skill develop and new trades emerge. In the long run, as the instruments of labour improve and the workers develop, the relationship of people in the production process, the relations of production, also change.*

The productive forces give rise to and form definite relations of production. But the productive forces existing at a certain time bring into being only definite production relations which correspond to the internal nature of these forces. The capitalist manufacture which originated within feudalism brought into being capitalist, and no other, relations of production.

Arising on the basis of the productive forces, the relations of production themselves too do not remain passive. They *actively influence* the productive forces, accelerating or retarding their development. We should bear in mind that progressive, new production relations, corresponding to the nature of the productive forces, *accelerate* the expansion of social production and are the prime mover in the development of the productive forces. On the other hand, old production relations which lag behind the development of the productive forces *hinder* their advance.

Production relations must conform to the nature of the productive forces for production to develop. In one form or another this has been the case in all the socio-economic formations. In the pre-socialist formations based on private property and exploitation, however, production relations cannot permanently conform to the developing productive forces. It is only at the initial stage of the given mode of

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* These points are discussed in greater detail on pp. 205-10.

production that production relations conform to the nature of the productive forces and consequently act as the prime mover in the development of production. Then the production relations gradually become obsolete, lag behind the development of the productive forces, and this results in a contradiction between the new productive forces and the old production relations.

This contradiction is not accidental, it stems from the intrinsic nature of various sides of social production. Productive forces are the most mobile element of production. They constantly change, and even within the bounds of the same mode of production these changes can be very considerable. The relations of production, although they undergo certain changes, basically remain unaltered within the bounds of the given mode of production. During the existence of capitalism, for example, its productive forces have undergone deep changes, but the relations of production today, as before, are based on private capitalist ownership.

Being less mobile, the production relations do not keep pace with the development of the productive forces and, falling behind, begin to retard their advance and come into contradiction with them. As the productive forces develop further, the retarding role of the production relations is felt more and more, and the contradiction between the two becomes more acute, growing ultimately into a conflict. Social revolution becomes a necessity in order to destroy the old production relations and introduce new ones.

This is the objective dialectics of the productive forces and relations of production in an antagonistic class society. Let us see how this dialectics operates in the development of human society.

### 4. The History of Society as the Development and Law-Governed Succession of Modes of Production

Since the mode of production is the material basis of social life, determining all its other features, the history of society must be regarded above all as the history of the development and law-governed succession of the modes of production.

History knows five consecutive modes of production: primitive-communal, slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist. We shall examine them in the same sequence.

### *Primitive Society*

The history of society begins with the appearance of man, whose ability to make and use implements of labour sets him apart from animals. Labour holds the most important place in the emergence and development of man. It was in the process of labour that man himself was moulded and the forms of his social organisation arose and developed.

The primitive-communal system was the first and lowest form of organisation of people and it existed for tens of thousands of years. During this long period man succeeded in advancing from the use of objects of nature—sticks and stones—to making primitive implements. At first these were crude implements made of stone, wood, horn or bone (axes, knives, chisels, javelins and spears, fishing hooks, etc.). As time went on these implements were improved and carefully shaped. Then new implements appeared—bows and arrows, boats, sleighs and so on. Man learned how to make fire, which was of particularly great importance for the progress of humanity.

Together with the perfection of implements, people developed and improved their work. From the gathering of natural products (edible fruit, berries and grasses) man went over to cultivating plants, to farming, and from hunting wild animals, to their taming and domestication, to livestock raising.

The extremely low level of the productive forces under primitive communism also determined the corresponding relations of production, which were based on common ownership of the means of production and were therefore relations of co-operation and mutual assistance between people. These relations were conditioned by the fact that people with their primitive implements could only withstand the mighty forces of nature together, collectively. In primitive society people lived in groups, in clans based on consanguineous ties. They worked the communal land together with common

tools, had a common dwelling which sheltered them from bad weather and wild beasts. The products they obtained were shared equally.

Even in primitive society the productive forces developed steadily, though slowly. The instruments of labour were improved and skills were gradually accumulated. The transition from stone to metal tools was a tremendous leap forward in production. The new implements—the wooden plough with a metal plough-share, the bronze or iron axe, etc.—made labour more productive. It became possible to grow crops and raise livestock on a wider scale. The first big social division of labour took place when stock raising became separated from crop growing. Somewhat later the crafts (making of tools, weapons, clothing, footwear, etc.) emerged as an independent branch of production. Exchange of products began to develop.

With the growth of labour productivity the clan began to break up into families. Private property arose and the family became the owner of the means of production. However, the means of production were mainly concentrated in the hands of families of the former clan nobility. Since the producer began to make more things than were necessary for his own subsistence, the possibility arose of appropriating the surplus product and, consequently, of some members of society getting rich at the expense of others. The spread of private property and commodity exchange speeded up the disintegration of the clan. Primitive equality gave way to social inequality. The first antagonistic classes, slaves and slave-owners, appeared.

This is how the development of the productive forces led to the replacement of primitive society by slave society.

### *Slave Society*

The productive forces inherited from primitive society were further developed in *slave society*. The wooden and stone implements were completely superseded at first by bronze and then iron implements. The wooden plough with the metal plough-share and then the iron plough, the metal sickle and other implements increased labour productivity in agriculture. Aiongside crop growing the cultivation of fruit and

vegetables arose. People built canals, dykes, water-raising devices to irrigate the land, and mills to mill grain into flour. Ore mining and smelting developed, with people employing the simplest tools such as picks and hammers for mining the ore, crushing mills or mortars for crushing the ore, and primitive furnaces for smelting the metal.

The division of labour was intensified. In the crafts various branches emerged: metal smelting and forging, making of weapons, clothing and footwear, weaving, tanning, pottery making, etc. More and more special tools were used by the craftsmen and a primitive lathe and bellows appeared.

Construction, shipbuilding and weapon making became widely developed, towns grew up and commerce spread.

The development of the productive forces in slave society was promoted by the corresponding production relations. These relations were based on the slave-owner's complete ownership of both the means of production and the slave himself and everything he produced. The owner left the slave only the bare minimum necessary to keep him from starvation.

In slave society there existed relations of domination and subjection, cruel exploitation by the handful of slave-owners over the mass of slaves who possessed no rights at all. For a time these relations promoted the development of the productive forces, but then their potentialities were exhausted and they became an impediment to the expansion of social production. Production demanded the constant improvement of implements, higher labour productivity, but the slave had no interest in this because it would not improve his position in the least. Moreover, the slave himself—the main productive force—owing to inhuman exploitation was both physically and mentally degraded.

As time went on the contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations in slave society became extremely acute. This contradiction was manifested in slave revolts. The slaves, ruthlessly exploited and brought to sheer desperation, rose up against their enslavers. These revolts, together with raids from neighbouring tribes, undermined the foundations of slave society, and on the ruins arose a new, feudal society.

The progressive development of the productive forces continued under *feudalism* as well. It was in this period that men began to employ, in addition to their muscular strength, the power of water and wind, to make use of water- and wind-driven mills, sailing ships, etc. Men learned how to produce iron out of pig iron, invented paper, gun-powder, book printing and made a number of other discoveries which played a big part in the history of mankind.

The crafts advanced further; new implements and machines were invented and the old ones were improved. Progress was particularly apparent in textile production in which a spinning-wheel, ribbon loom, twisting machine and other innovations were introduced. The labour of the craftsman became specialised, considerably raising productivity. With the development of the crafts and trade towns grew, some of them becoming major world craft and trading centres.

Agriculture made progress as new varieties of grain, fruit and vegetables were cultivated; the soil was tilled more thoroughly and fertilisers were introduced. Animal husbandry was extended, draught animals were employed on a wider scale and the output of animal products was increased.

The development of the productive forces under feudalism was facilitated by the feudal relations of production. These relations were based on the feudal lord's ownership of the means of production (mainly the land) and part ownership of the serfs. The serfs had to work for the feudal lord and perform all kinds of labour services for him. The feudal lord could buy and sell serfs, but their lives no longer belonged to him.

The production relations in feudalism, as in slave society, were relations of domination and subjection, exploitation of the serfs by the feudal lords. Nevertheless, they were more progressive than in slave society, because they made the producer to some extent interested in his labour. The peasants and the artisans had their own property (the peasant could own a plot of land, a horse and other livestock, farming implements; the artisan owned tools or simple machines) with which, after performing all feudal duties, they worked

for themselves. They had an interest in improving the implements and methods of farming and handicraft.

As time went on the productive forces continued to develop. A particularly big impetus to their progress was given by the great geographical discoveries at the turn of the 16th century (the discovery of America, the route to India, and so on). An international market began to take shape and the demand for various commodities increased, which handicraft production was no longer able to satisfy. Manufacture came to take the place of the handicraft workshop.

Manufacture brought together under one roof a large number of workers, introduced a wide division of labour between them and thereby greatly increased labour productivity. The rise of manufacture signified the birth within feudal society of new, capitalist production and its intrinsic, opposing classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

With the appearance of manufacture the productive forces came into contradiction with the feudal production relations. Manufacture demanded a free worker while feudalism tied the serf to the land; manufacture needed a broad, international market, the establishment of which was hampered by the closed feudal economy, its isolation and the natural economy. It became necessary to replace the feudal relations of production with new, capitalist relations. This was accomplished by a number of bourgeois revolutions in which the main fighting force was the serfs and the lower sections of the urban population led by the bourgeoisie.

### *Capitalist Society*

Large-scale machine production is the specific feature of the productive forces of *capitalism*. Huge factories, plants and mines superseded the handicraft shop and manufacture. "Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground"—this is how Marx and Engels described the capitalist productive forces in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In a couple of centuries capitalism accomplished much more in developing the

productive forces than had been done in all the preceding eras of human history.

This vigorous growth of the productive forces was facilitated by the capitalist relations of production, based on private capitalist ownership which gradually but inexorably ousted feudal ownership.

Under capitalism the producer, the proletarian, is legally free, being attached neither to the land nor to any particular factory. He is free in the sense that he can go to work for any capitalist, but he is not free from the bourgeois class as a whole. Having no means of production, he is compelled to sell his labour power and thereby come under the yoke of exploitation.

Capitalist relations of production brought into being capitalist profit which is a great stimulus to the development of production. It is in the drive for profit that the capitalist extends production, improves machinery and production methods in industry and agriculture. These relations, however, not only determine an unprecedented growth in production, but also give rise to productive forces which place the capitalist system as a whole on the brink of doom. Marx and Engels likened capital to a sorcerer, whose incantations bring into action forces so powerful that he is unable to control them.

With the titanic growth of the productive forces, capitalist relations of production cease to correspond to them and turn into fetters on their development. The deepest contradiction of the capitalist mode of production is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private capitalist form of appropriation. Production in capitalist society bears a strikingly pronounced social character. Many millions of workers are concentrated at large plants and take part in social production, while the fruits of the workers' labour are appropriated by a small group of owners of the means of production. This is the basic contradiction of capitalism.

Towards the end of the last century capitalism grew into *imperialism*, its highest and last stage. The crux of imperialism is the domination of monopolies, which replaces free competition. Monopolies are large associations of

capitalists who concentrate in their hands the production and marketing of the bulk of certain commodities.

The aim of the monopolies is to extract the highest profits possible. To this end the imperialists intensify the exploitation of the working people in their own country and in the colonies and dependent countries. Having divided up the world among themselves, the imperialists engage in a bitter struggle for its re-division.

Imperialism aggravates all the contradictions of capitalism to the extreme, especially the contradiction between the social character of production and the private form of appropriation. This contradiction gives rise to crises and unemployment, causes fierce class battles between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and constitutes the economic basis for the socialist revolution. The victorious socialist revolution abolishes the capitalist production relations and introduces the socialist mode of production.

*CHAPTER XII*

# THE SOCIALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION. DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALISM INTO COMMUNISM

We have examined the development of social production and have learned that each new mode of production, based on the antagonism of classes, originates within the preceding system. Let us now find out how the *socialist mode of production* arises and what are the particular features of its birth and development.

## 1. Particular Features of the Rise of the Socialist Mode of Production

The socialist mode of production, in contrast to the capitalist, is based on social ownership and is incompatible with exploitation. This means that it cannot be engendered in the womb of capitalism like the capitalist system was engendered in feudal society.

From this, however, it does not follow that socialism springs up from nothing. The prerequisites for socialism arise under capitalism, i.e., large-scale machine production, a high degree of concentration and socialisation of labour, and a high level of scientific and technical progress. The force destined to build socialism, the working class, also arises under capitalism. It passes through a hard school of struggle against the bourgeoisie, organises its own party and masters a progressive, scientific ideology.

These prerequisites alone, however, are far from sufficient for creating the socialist mode of production, inasmuch as socialist relations of production cannot take shape within capitalism. Socialism makes a clean sweep of private property, abolishes exploitation and all other forms of oppression for ever. For this, however, a socialist revolution and a whole period of transition from capitalism to socialism are required. During this period, the working class, which has taken power, together with all the other working people, consciously and in a planned way builds up the new, socialist mode of production. The socialist state and the Communist Party play a tremendous role in this process.

The working class of Russia, having gained political power as a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution, at once began to create conditions for the establishment of socialist production relations. First of all large-scale capitalist production was nationalised—large-scale industry, banks, transport and means of communication. This introduced socialist production relations in the main sphere of the national economy, industry. At the same time land ownership by the landlords was abolished. These crucial measures undermined the economic power of the bourgeoisie, abolished the reactionary class of landlords and reinforced the alliance between the working class and the mass of peasants.

Once the working class had control of the key positions in the economy, it was able to begin building socialism according to the plan worked out by Lenin, the chief elements of which were industrialisation of the country and the collectivisation of agriculture. Victory of the industrialisation policy made it possible to build up the productive forces of socialism in industry and also to lay the groundwork for the socialist transformation of agriculture, for its provision with modern machinery. Application of the Leninist co-operative plan created a large-scale, mechanised, socialist agriculture. This signified that socialist production relations had struck root in the most backward branch of the economy.

Industrialisation and collectivisation resulted in the entrenchment of the socialist mode of production in the Soviet Union towards the end of the 1930s. In 1937, 99

per cent of the country's productive assets were socially owned. In that year socialist enterprises contributed 99.8 per cent of total industrial output and collective farms and state farms, 98.5 per cent of agricultural output.

The People's Democracies in Europe and Asia are following the socialist road. The establishment of the socialist mode of production in these countries has proceeded according to the general laws of the whole socialist system, but the forms and rates of the socialist changes differ from country to country. The forms of the change of capitalist into socialist industry and the pace of industrialisation, for example, vary. In countries, whose industry was backward, industrialisation is proceeding at a faster rate than in industrially advanced countries. Forms of agricultural co-operation also vary.

For all the diversity of forms the essence of these changes remains the same: private, capitalist ownership is abolished and social, socialist ownership, the economic basis of socialism, is introduced.

## 2. Dialectics of the Productive Forces and Production Relations Under Socialism

### *Productive Forces and Production Relations Under Socialism*

The *productive forces* of socialist society are socialist industry and agriculture, transport and means of communication, the construction industry, and the people engaged in these branches of the economy. The Soviet Union has over 200,000 large enterprises producing the bulk of the industrial output, and tens of thousands of local enterprises. There are about 8,000 state farms and tens of thousands of collective farms. The U.S.S.R. has a large network of railways and roads, inland waterways and merchant marine. The means of communication—telegraph, telephone, radio, television, etc.—are widely developed.

The technological foundation of the socialist economy consists of large-scale, constantly progressing machine industry, based on the wide use of electricity and chemistry as well as atomic energy in some branches, and on overall mechanisation and automation.

Heavy industry is the cornerstone of the entire economy of the Soviet Union, the source of its might and wealth.

The people—workers, collective farmers, technicians and engineers—are the principal element of the productive forces of socialism. In Soviet times they have accumulated vast production skill, are successfully operating the most diverse and intricate machines and ensuring steady technical progress and the constant growth of labour productivity.

Development of the productive forces—constant improvement of the means of production and the people's skill—is a necessary requisite for the socialist economy's progress.

*Socialist relations of production* have arisen and are developing on the basis of socialism's productive forces. These relations are founded on *social, socialist ownership* of the means of production. There are two forms of socialist property: *state*, i.e., property belonging to the whole people represented by the socialist state, and *co-operative collective-farm property*, i.e., the property of individual collective farms or co-operatives. Both forms of property are socialist in character and ensure the accomplishment of the tasks of communist construction. State property is the dominant form in socialist society.

Socialist ownership determines the production relations of fraternal *co-operation and mutual assistance* between workers. The greatest advantage of socialist production relations and their fundamental distinction from production relations in antagonistic class societies is that they preclude all exploitation of man by man.

The socialist principle of distribution according to work has been applied on the basis of socialist ownership. This means that it is the duty of each member of society to work and that each member receives from society material wealth in accordance with the quantity and quality of his work.

The essence of the production relations under socialism are socialist ownership of the means of production and the consequent relations of comradely co-operation and mutual assistance of workers free from exploitation and also the socialist principle of distribution according to work.

### *Conformity of the Socialist Production Relations to the Productive Forces*

Socialist society has done away for ever with the antagonistic contradiction between the social character of production and the private form of appropriation inherent in capitalism. Under socialism, production bears a strikingly pronounced social character. Millions of workers and collective farmers are engaged in industry and agriculture. But in contrast to capitalism, where the fruits of the labour of millions are appropriated by a small group of exploiters, in socialist society the fruits of labour belong to the producers, the working people themselves. The dominance of social ownership, which constitutes the basis of socialist production relations, also determines the social nature of distribution. Three-quarters of the Soviet Union's national income goes to satisfy the personal material and cultural requirements of the working people. The rest of the national income is used for expanding production and for other social needs, i.e., is also spent in the working people's interest.

In socialist society *relations of production conform to the character of the productive forces.* This conformity, it should be stressed, is not of a temporary, transitory nature, and takes place not only in the initial period of production's development, as is the case under capitalism, but throughout the existence and development of the socialist mode of production. This is because the social character of the productive forces under socialism corresponds to the social ownership of the means of production.

Since they conform with the productive forces, socialist relations of production afford unusual scope for their advance and are a powerful factor in the expansion of production. It is not the quest for profit, but the interest of all the working people in production's progress that is the driving force behind the development of the socialist economy.

The socialist relations of co-operation and mutual assistance are most clearly evident in *socialist emulation*, through which the working people strive to eliminate short-

comings in their work, to assist those who lag behind and to make them advance to the level of the leading workers.

Socialist production relations also contain a powerful stimulus to economic progress in the form of *material interest* of the workers in the results of their labour. The better and more efficiently a worker, collective farmer or intellectual works, the greater his remuneration. This also benefits society. *Combination of personal and social interests* in socialist society is an important factor in economic development.

Thanks to the socialist relations of production, the Soviet people, led by the Communist Party, have transformed backward Russia into a powerful industrial and agricultural socialist state. In 1962, the production of pig iron in the Soviet Union was 13 times greater than in tsarist Russia in 1913; steel, 18 times; oil, 20 times and coal, about 18 times.

The engineering and metal-working industry now produces in one day as much as it did in tsarist Russia in a whole year. Power plants generate in a little over two days as much electricity as was generated in old Russia in a year. Agriculture has advanced a long way. Lenin dreamed of having a hundred thousand tractors to demonstrate to the peasants the advantages of mechanised collective farming. Today millions of tractors and other agricultural machines work the fields, demonstrating the power of the collective-farm system.

The growth rate of socialist industry is several times higher than in the most advanced capitalist countries. From 1956 to 1961, the average annual growth rate of Soviet industrial output was 10.2 per cent, while in the United States it was only 2.3 per cent. The Soviet Union is confidently overtaking the United States both in total and in per capita output.

Socialist production relations ensure rapid economic growth in all the socialist countries. While in the last decade the average annual growth rate of the capitalist economy as a whole did not exceed 5 per cent, in the socialist world the growth rate was nearly 14 per cent.

Conformity of the productive forces and relations of production under socialism does not rule out certain contradictions between them. In socialist society too the productive forces, representing the content of social production, are its most mobile and revolutionising side. The form, the relations of production, however, as any form, lags behind the development of the content. That is why certain contradictions exist between the productive forces and the relations of production under socialism.

What is the essence of these contradictions?

We have already stated that socialist relations of co-operation and mutual assistance have arisen between people under socialism on the basis of social ownership of the means of production. These relations constitute an intricate chain of interaction between industrial and agricultural workers, between various branches both of industry and of agriculture, between town and country, physical and mental work, and so on.

This chain of interaction and economic ties between Soviet people conforms on the whole to the character of the productive forces and ensures their rapid and all-round development. However good the chain is, some of its links do not always develop apace with the vigorous growth of the productive forces. As a result the economic relations come into contradiction with the productive forces and turn into a brake on economic progress. It becomes necessary to replace the obsolete links by new ones and ensure the further unhindered development of production. The planned socialist economy, the absence of antagonistic classes, the interest of all the people in removing the obstacles to production's development enable the Communist Party and the Soviet state to improve socialist relations of production, to replace in good time the outworn links of these relations by new, progressive ones and thereby resolve the contradictions in the socialist mode of production.

Here are a few examples.

When the level of mechanisation in Soviet agriculture was not very high, collective farms with only a small amount

of land were organised. In time agricultural technique greatly increased, but the small size of the collective farms hindered the efficient use of the available machinery resulting in certain contradictions in agricultural production. By amalgamating and enlarging the collective farms, the Communist Party and the Soviet state, with the full consent and support of the collective farmers, removed this contradiction and ensured the growth of agricultural production.

Subsequently, the development of the productive forces in agriculture came into contradiction with the obsolete forms of providing technical service to the collective farms through the machine and tractor stations. These stations played a tremendous part in organising the collective-farm system. When the collective farms gained considerable strength, however, the presence of two masters (the machine and tractor station and the collective farm) on the same land began to hinder the efficient employment of machinery and labour power.

This contradiction was resolved through reorganising the machine and tractor stations and selling machinery to the collective farms in 1958. This measure was an important step in the development of the socialist relations of production. It consolidated the ties between industry and agriculture and reinforced the collective-farm system. The collective farm became the sole master over the state land allotted for its perpetual use, and the fully-fledged manager of its labour resources and machinery.

The establishment in 1957 of local economic councils in place of the old system of industrial and construction management through central ministries and departments, of which we spoke earlier, was an important step which removed an obstacle to the advance of the productive forces. This measure markedly improved the utilisation of productive capacity and natural resources. This reorganisation further consolidated and developed production ties between various economic areas and enterprises and, consequently, the relations of co-operation and mutual assistance between the working people.

From this it follows that the conformity of the productive forces and production relations under socialism is

not something rigid or fixed once and for all. This conformity, while constantly developing and improving, does not preclude certain contradictions. But in contrast to capitalism, where the production relations as a whole stand in antagonistic contradiction to the productive forces, in socialist society only individual features or sides of these relations lag behind the development of the productive forces. Whereas the contradictions of capitalist production ultimately lead to socialist revolution, to the replacement of capitalist production relations by new, socialist relations, the resolving of non-antagonistic contradictions in the mode of production under socialism is effected by the replacement of only some, obsolete elements of the production relations. The production relations as a whole undergo further development and improvement.

### 3. Building the Material and Technical Basis of Communism and the Transformation of Socialist into Communist Production Relations

The big achievements in all spheres of social life, the great successes of socialism have enabled the Soviet Union to enter a new period in its development, the *period of full-scale communist construction.* The main economic task of this period is *to build the material and technical basis of communism.* Let us examine what this basis is, how it is built and how it serves as the foundation for transforming socialist into communist production relations.

#### *Building the Material and Technical Basis of Communism*

Despite the great successes of socialist industry in the Soviet Union, it is not yet able to ensure an abundance of material and spiritual wealth necessary for satisfying all the growing requirements of people, for their all-round harmonious development. And without this communism is impossible. To build communist society, it is necessary first of all to achieve another, even greater advance of social production; in other words, it is necessary to build the material and technical basis of communism.

This is the decisive link in the chain of economic, social and cultural tasks and it is dictated both by the internal and external conditions of the Soviet Union's development. Creation of the material and technical basis of communism will enable the Soviet Union to carry out many important tasks of communist construction, namely:

to create productive forces of unparalleled might, to advance to first place in the world in per capita output and thereby win the economic competition with capitalism;

to expand the production of material wealth for satisfying all the requirements of the Soviet people, to ensure the highest living standard for the entire population and to create all the requisites for the subsequent transition to distribution according to needs;

to ensure the highest labour productivity in the world, which in the final analysis is the most important, the chief factor in the victory of the new, communist system; to equip the Soviet people with the most advanced technology and thereby turn labour into a source of happiness, inspiration and creative endeavour;

to gradually transform socialist production relations into communist, to create a classless society, to eradicate the essential distinctions between town and country and then between mental and physical labour;

to constantly maintain the country's defences at a level high enough to crush any aggressor who dares to attack the Soviet Union or the entire socialist camp.

What are the particular features of the material and technical basis of communism, and what are the ways and periods necessary for building it?

The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. gives an exhaustive answer to these questions. It emphasises that building the material and technical basis of communism is not merely a quantitative increase of productive capacity, is not simply expansion. There must be above all profound *qualitative changes* in the very nature of the production process. The qualitative distinctions of the material and technical basis of communism include: complete electrification of the country and, on this basis, improvement of the machinery, technology and organisation of social production in all branches of the economy; overall mechanisation and auto-

mation of production processes, the wide application of chemical processes and products in the economy; development to the full of new, economically efficient branches of production, new kinds of power and materials; all-round and rational utilisation of natural, material and labour resources; organic fusion of science with production and rapid rates of scientific and technical progress; a high cultural and technical level of the working people; considerable superiority over the most advanced capitalist countries in labour productivity.

*Electrification* is the hub of the construction of the communist economy. It plays a leading part in the development of all branches of the national economy, in technical progress in all fields. That is why the new Party Programme provides for the expansion of the electric power industry at a faster rate than the other branches of the economy. By the end of twenty-year period (1980) the annual generation of electric power in the Soviet Union will reach about 3,000,000 million kilowatt-hours, approximately 50 per cent more than is now generated annually by all the power plants in the rest of the world put together. The generation of this amount of electric power will bring alive Lenin's famous slogan: "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the entire country."

Complete electrification will greatly accelerate *scientific and technical progress*, i.e., the continuous development and perfection of machinery, technological processes and organisation of production on the basis of the latest achievements of science and technology, will make possible the *overall mechanisation and wide automation of production.* This will bring about a steep rise in labour productivity along with a considerable lightening of labour. Automatic machines and electricity will relieve man of arduous, harmful and unskilled labour, thus making it interesting, creative and not physically burdensome. This is an indispensable requisite for converting labour into life's prime want.

Further rapid expansion in the production of *metal and fuel*, development of *engineering*, *construction*, all means of *transport* and *communication* are of primary importance in creating the material and technical basis of communism.

The Party Programme provides for the production of 250 million tons of steel, and 690-710 million tons of oil in 1980. In the course of 20 years the output of the engineering and metal-working industry will increase 10-11 times and of cement, more than five times.

The *chemical industry* will advance at an exceptionally rapid pace. The production of synthetic resins and plastics, for example, will increase 60 times in 20 years! And this is natural for modern industrial production with its unprecedented speeds, huge pressures and extremely high temperatures is inconceivable without new synthetic materials, fuel and raw materials with qualities far exceeding everything known in nature. The wide use of synthetic materials opens up tremendous prospects for the development of science and technology, extends man's power over nature and makes his life more pleasant.

*Rational distribution of the productive forces* is an important task in full-scale communist construction. For this purpose the Soviet people will build new electric power stations, factories, plants and mines east of the Urals, in areas rich in incalculable natural resources, raw materials and fuel. The economy in all other areas will continue to develop on a large scale. The rational distribution of the productive forces will ensure a saving of labour, the comprehensive development of all areas, specialisation of their economy and elimination of over-population in the cities. This will help to even up the economic development levels in different areas.

*Science* plays a great part in laying the material and technical basis of communism. As communist construction advances the latest achievements of science will be applied on an increasingly wide scale. This will result in the organic fusion of science with production, and science will become a direct productive force. The fusion of science with production will be a major factor in the acceleration of scientific and technical progress.

In the process of building communism, alongside the development of the instruments and means of production, people, the main productive force of society, will also change. The development and improvement of the means of production necessarily presuppose people capable of

furthering technical progress and keeping in step with it, people who do not lag behind the higher demands made on them by more complex technology. These people—workers, technicians, engineers and scientists called upon to set into motion the technology of communism, to breathe life into it—are brought up in the process of building the material and technical basis of communism.

Technical progress greatly increases the demands for production efficiency, the special training and general education of all the working people. As technology develops and improves, therefore, the *cultural and technical level of all the workers in production* steadily rises. This is largely facilitated by the lighter working conditions, shorter working hours and improved standards of living which are inseparably connected with the technological progress.

The working people will have comprehensive education and technical skill and will be able to operate mechanised and automatic machines; this is a prime requisite for the attainment of the extremely *high labour productivity* which will be characteristic of communist production.

Alongside a powerful industry there must be development of a diversified and highly productive *agriculture* as an indispensable condition for building the material and technical basis of communism. A big advance in agriculture's productive forces will enable society to obtain an abundance of food for the population and raw materials for industry and also to ensure the gradual transition of the Soviet countryside to communist social relations.

The material and technical basis of communism will be built in two consecutive stages.

In the *current decade* (*1961-70*) the Soviet Union will increase both industrial and agricultural output approximately 2.5 times and surpass the most powerful and richest country in the capitalist world, the United States, in per capita production, including basic agricultural commodities. As a result, all Soviet people will enjoy material sufficiency and will in the main have good housing accommodation. Arduous manual labour will disappear, and the Soviet Union will have the shortest working day in the world.

During the *second decade* (*1971-80*) the material and technical basis of communism will be laid in the Soviet Union. In 20 years industrial production will increase six times and agricultural output, about 3.5 times. This progress will be equivalent to building within the U.S.S.R. five more industrial countries and over two more agricultural countries like the Soviet Union today. This will constitute the basis for attaining an abundance of material and spiritual necessities and comforts for the entire population, so that the Soviet Union can draw near to the application of the communist principle of distribution according to needs. *Communist society will in the main be built* in the U.S.S.R. Communist construction will be fully completed in the subsequent period.

### *Transformation of Socialist into Communist Production Relations*

The building of the material and technical basis of communism serves as the foundation for the further development of socialist production relations and their gradual transformation into communist relations, which will be *the most perfect relations between free people of high intelligence and all-round development.*

Both socialist and communist relations of production are based on social ownership of the means of production. But under communism, instead of the two forms of property—state and co-operative collective-farm—which exist under socialism, there will be *one communist property* belonging to all members of society.

Communism will be reached through the development and improvement of both forms of socialist property. State property will mature still more through the increasing concentration of production and socialisation of labour, wider specialisation and co-operation. The changes in co-operative collective-farm property will be particularly deep. The continuous development of the productive forces in the collective farms will provide the basis for gradually raising the level of socialisation of collective-farm production and drawing co-operative collective-farm property increas-

ingly closer to state property and the eventual merger of the two into one communist property. This process is already under way. There is a growth in the inalienable assets* of the collective farms, which constitute the economic basis for the further development of production; inter-collective farm ties are developing and will be further extended. There will be wider joint construction by several collective farms of electric power plants, establishments for processing agricultural products, etc. With the development of rural electrification, mechanisation and automation of agricultural production, the combining of collective-farm and state-owned means of production will be effected on an ever wider scale. As the collective farms develop, the requirements of their members in farm produce will be increasingly satisfied not by their personal subsidiary husbandries which are not very productive, but by the output of the collective farms.

The need for the gradual drawing together of co-operative collective-farm property and state property does not at all mean that at present the collective-farm form of property has fully outlived itself. This form of property fully corresponds to the level and the requirements of the development of modern productive forces in the countryside. The collective farm is a school of communism for the peasants; therefore the way to promote communist relations of production in the countryside is to strengthen and develop in every way the collective-farm system.

Socialist production relations, as pointed out earlier, are relations of co-operation, friendship and mutual assistance between all members of society. In the course of communist construction these relations, inherent also in communist society, will reach a very high degree of perfection. Exchange of productive activity between town and country will become closer and more diversified. There will be further development in forms of co-operation in production between the country's economic areas, in economic ties between enterprises within areas, as well as

* The inalienable assets are the common assets of the collective farm which are not divided among the members. They include machinery, motors, farm buildings, livestock and money for investment in the collective farm.

among workers at individual enterprises. As a result, a highly organised and smooth-functioning *communist commonwealth of workingmen* will arise. Each member of society will perform his labour duties with devotion and enthusiasm and actively participate in the life of society. "Communism," it is pointed out in the Programme of the C.P.S.U., "represents the highest form of organisation of public life. All production units and self-governing associations will be harmoniously united in a common, planned economy and a uniform rhythm of social labour."

The movement for communist labour by teams and entire factories, whose workers already now set models of the new, communist attitude to their tasks, is of great importance in the development and improvement of socialist production relations and the planting of communist social relations. These teams and staffs of enterprises regard as their main task to master new technology, steadily to improve production skills and to raise their general culture.

In the emulation for communist labour new relations between people arise, a higher type of collectivism and mutual assistance takes shape and people are encouraged to gain knowledge, to engage in pioneering, creative endeavour and to help others rid themselves of harmful habits and traditions.

As the productive forces grow and the production of material and spiritual wealth increases, the distribution of material values will improve. As a result, people's material and cultural requirements will be satisfied to an ever greater extent.

The heroic labour of the Soviet people, as the Party Programme declares, has created a powerful and comprehensively developed economy. Now there is every requisite for the rapid rise in the standards of living of the entire population. The C.P.S.U. has set a task of historic significance—*to achieve in the Soviet Union a standard of living higher than in all capitalist countries*. The Programme calls for the rapid expansion of consumer goods production. The growing resources of industry will be increasingly used for the all-round satisfaction of the requirements of the Soviet people, for the building and equipment of cultural and consumer-service establishments.

In the next ten years (1961-70) the national income will rise nearly 2.5 times and in 20 years (1961-80) it will rise approximately 5 times. Real per capita income will grow over 3.5 times in 20 years. Moreover, the steady increase in real income will be accompanied by a continuous reduction in working hours and improvement of working conditions.

The main way to advance the standard of living is to raise wages in accordance with the quantity and quality of work and to reduce retail prices and abolish taxes.

Socialist society, as we pointed out earlier, is still unable to fully satisfy all the requirements of its citizens. That is why the Communist Party calls for the further strict application and improvement of the socialist principle of distribution according to work, combining material and moral stimuli. The present readjustment of wages is very important in this respect; its purpose is to make the workers' earnings in every branch of the national economy conform more closely to the quantity and quality of the work done. Account is taken of the need to gradually narrow down the difference in workers' earnings in the higher-paid and lower-paid groups.

The forms of remuneration in the collective farms are also being improved. Labour remuneration in the collective farms will gradually conform to that at state enterprises. The collective farmers will also receive all forms of social maintenance (paid holidays, pensions, etc.) at the expense of the state and of the collective farms.

Alongside a rise in the individual earnings of the working people there is another way of achieving the highest standard of living in the world, namely, of greatly extending the public funds distributed among the members of society independent of the quantity and quality of work, i.e., free (allotments for education, medical service, maintenance of children in nurseries, kindergartens and so on).

With the advance of Soviet society to communism, growth of the public consumption funds designated for satisfying personal requirements will be much faster than that of individual wages. As a result, in 20 years the public consumption funds will account for nearly half of all the real incomes of the population. This will enable society to

ensure the free maintenance of children in nurseries, kindergartens, boarding schools, to provide free education in all educational institutions, free medical service to all citizens, including the provision of medicines and sanatorium treatment, rent-free housing, free public utilities, urban transport and some other forms of service. Payment for holiday homes and tourist centres will be gradually reduced and become partly free; free meals (dinners) at factories, offices and collective farms will be gradually introduced. The population will be given allowances, privileges and scholarships on an ever wider scale. Society will fully assume material care of the disabled.

It is in this way, through steady increase in the public funds for satisfying personal requirements combined with distribution according to work, that the socialist principle of distribution according to work will be gradually transformed into the communist principle of distribution according to needs. The final transition to the communist principle of distribution, however, will only be made when the socialist principle will fully exhaust itself, i.e., when an abundance of the material and spiritual necessities and comforts will be attained, thus making labour life's prime want for all members of society. The faster the productive forces develop and labour productivity rises, and the more effort Soviet people put into their work, the sooner this time will arrive.

These are the main economic tasks of communist construction in the Soviet Union, the accomplishment of which will be of great importance for all mankind. "When the Soviet people will enjoy the blessings of communism, new hundreds of millions of people on earth will say: 'We are for communism!'"—the Programme states. "It is not through war with other countries but by the example of a more perfect organisation of society, by rapid progress in developing the productive forces, the creation of all conditions for the happiness and well-being of man, that the ideas of communism win the minds and hearts of the masses."

Communism is the great goal of the Communist Party and the Soviet people. What is communism and what prospects does it open up to mankind?

## 4. Communism—the Radiant Future of All Mankind

Communism is the age-old dream of mankind. As early as the beginning of the 16th century, in the dark days of the Middle Ages, the English scholar and humanist Sir Thomas More described in his book *Utopia* a society in which there will be no exploitation of man by man, where people will create an abundance of the means of livelihood and each will receive all of life's necessities according to his requirements. This society was also the dream of the Italian philosopher Tommaso Campanella, the French Utopian Socialists Fourier and Saint-Simon, the Russian writer and philosopher Chernyshevsky and many other intelligent minds. The Utopian Socialists made a scathing criticism of capitalism and anticipated some of the features of communist society which must take the place of capitalism. They were unable, however, to reveal the actual ways for building this society. The utopian, unrealistic nature of their dreams of communism was conditioned by the immaturity of the social relations of that period. Neither the development of production nor other social conditions permitted communist construction in their day.

Only Marx and Engels transformed communism from a utopia into a science. Having discovered the laws of human history, they demonstrated that communism is not a vain dream, but an inevitable result of social development. Marx and Engels not only described the most typical features of communism, but also indicated the ways to achieve communism. Having exposed the deepest contradictions of capitalism, they proved that the socialist revolution is the only way for resolving these contradictions. They also indicated that the revolutionary force destined to destroy the old world and build the new one is the working class. By abolishing the rule of the bourgeoisie, the working class establishes its own power, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and by organising the working people, ensures the victory of socialism.

Lenin developed the Marxist teaching of communism a step further. He made a more detailed and profound definition of the two phases of communist society which had been mentioned by Marx and Engels, drew up a plan for

building socialism and revealed the laws for the gradual development of socialism into communism.

The Soviet people, following uncharted paths, overcoming tremendous hardships and privation, under the leadership of the Communist Party carried out Lenin's plan of building socialism. And socialism triumphed completely and finally in the Soviet Union. The titanic labour and selfless struggle of the people, the unbending courage of the Party brought the Soviet Union to the direct approaches to communism; the building of communist society has now become the direct practical task of the Soviet people.

What is communism?

"*Communism*," in the words of the Party Programme, "*is a classless social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society; under it, the all-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of the productive forces through continuous progress in science and technology; all the springs of co-operative wealth will flow more abundantly, and the great principle 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs' will be implemented. Communism is a highly organised society of free, socially conscious working people in which public self-government will be established, a society in which labour for the good of society will become life's prime want of everyone, a necessity recognised by one and all, and the ability of each person will be employed to the greatest benefit of the people.*"

Communism fulfils the historic mission of delivering all people from social inequality, from every form of oppression and exploitation, from the horrors of war and brings Peace, Labour, Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood and Happiness to all people on earth.

The establishment of communism in the world will be the greatest revolution in the long history of mankind and will bring deep changes in all spheres of life—production, the nature and conditions of labour, social relations, culture and the way of life, people's ideas and views. Communism will provide all members of society with living conditions which most fully meet the innermost aspirations of man and conform to the loftiest human ideals.

Communist society will be distinguished above all by a very high level of continuously expanding production and an unprecedentedly high level of labour productivity resulting from rapid scientific and technical progress. Communist society will attain the highest stage of planned economy and ensure the most purposive and rational use of material wealth and natural resources. People will be equipped with the best and mightiest technology, man's power over nature will be raised to tremendous heights, enabling him to control its spontaneous forces to a much greater extent and to employ them in his own interests. The aim of communist production will be to ensure continuous social progress, to give each member of society material and cultural necessities and comforts, satisfying his constantly growing requirements, interests and tastes.

Communism, however, will not be a society of anarchy, idleness and indolence. Labour will be the chief source of the material and spiritual wealth of communist society. Under communism everyone will voluntarily work according to his ability, multiplying the wealth and reinforcing the might of society. The very nature of work will change. Labour will cease to be merely a means of subsistence and turn into life's prime want, into genuine creative endeavour, into a source of joy and happiness.

Communism will put an end to the division of society into classes and social groups. Workers and peasants as classes will disappear as distinctions between town and country are eradicated in the social and economic spheres, in culture and way of life, and as the two forms of socialist property merge into one communist property. Manual workers will attain the cultural and technical level of intellectuals and hence there will be no intelligentsia as a separate social group under communism. Each member of society will engage in mental and manual labour, and in work mental and physical efforts will be organically combined.

All members of communist society, by virtue of their equal relation to the means of production, will be in the same position, enjoy equal conditions of work and distribution and actively participate in administering society's affairs. Harmonious relations between the individual and

society will become the rule because social and personal interests will be fully combined.

Human culture will soar to unprecedented heights. The culture of communist society, inheriting and developing all the best created by world culture, will represent a new and higher stage in mankind's cultural development. It will incorporate all the diversity and wealth of aesthetic life, the lofty ideology and humanism of the new society. This will be a classless, international culture of all mankind.

Under communism there will be a new man, who will combine spiritual wealth with moral purity and physical perfection, and who will have a high communist consciousness, industry, discipline and devotion to society's interests. The exceptional organisation and precision demanded of man by communist production will be ensured not by compulsion but by a profound sense of civic duty. Man's development will be comprehensive and harmonious; his abilities and talents will be given full rein and will blossom forth, his finest spiritual and physical qualities will be manifested to the full.

The building of communism will signify the attainment of the Communist Party's supreme goal of building a society on whose banner will be inscribed: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." The Party's slogan "Everything for the sake of Man, for the benefit of Man" will be applied in full measure.

*CHAPTER XIII*

# BASIS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE

We have already stated that the mode of production of material wealth is the chief, decisive force of social development. *How* the mode of production and the relations of production shape all the other social relations (political, legal, moral, etc.) and how the latter, in their turn, influence society's economic development are questions answered by the Marxist-Leninist theory of basis and superstructure.

## 1. Interaction of the Basis and Superstructure and the Particular Features of Their Development

### *What Are the Basis and the Superstructure?*

Of all the diverse social relations historical materialism singles out the *material, production relations* as the main and decisive ones. It is the sum of these production relations that constitutes the economic structure of society, its *basis*. The sum of production relations should be understood to mean the forms of property and, arising out of them, the relationship between people in the process of production and the way material wealth is distributed.

Each society has its own basis. The type of basis, as the sum of production relations, depends on the condition of the productive forces. No basis can appear until the corresponding material conditions, the productive forces necessary for its birth, arise within the old society.

Once it arises, the basis plays a tremendous part in the life of society. It enables people to organise the production and distribution of material wealth. Without entering into economic relations, people cannot produce and consequently cannot distribute the means of subsistence.

The basis is important because it serves as the foundation upon which the superstructure arises, i.e., the political, legal, philosophical, moral, artistic and religious views of society and their corresponding relations, institutions and organisations. That is why the basis is that aspect of the mode of production which *directly* moulds the *face* of society, its ideas and institutions.

The superstructure also plays a big part in social development. Arising on a definite economic basis, it ultimately expresses the attitude of people to this basis. Various ideas serve people as justification for the need to strengthen or destroy the given basis, while institutions and organisations (the state, political parties, etc.) enable them to apply these ideas. It is through the basis that the superstructure influences the development of the productive forces. It is well known, for example, what an important role the Communist Party, the Soviet state, the socialist superstructure as a whole, play in building the material and technical basis of communism, in developing communist production forces.

### *Determining Role of the Basis in Relation to the Superstructure*

The superstructure *is brought into being* by the basis and is inseparably bound up with it. The superstructure depends on the basis. Let us take, for example, the basis of primitive society. The absence of private property and of classes, and consequently of class contradictions, was the reason why the superstructure of primitive society had neither state, political and legal ideas, nor their corresponding institutions.

The birth of private property and classes, i.e., the appearance of the basis of slave society, brought into being

a superstructure of a different kind. There arose ideas justifying the rule of the slave-owner over the slave and also institutions (the state and others) protecting this rule.

The basis of an antagonistic class society has contradictions. By expressing the different relationships of people to the means of production, it reflects the antithesis of class interests, the antagonism between the oppressed and the oppressors. The economic basis of capitalism, for example, is marked above all by antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, although the economic structure of bourgeois society must not be confined only to the relationship between these two main, antagonistic classes. In addition to the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, capitalist society has other classes and social groups—the working peasants, artisans and the petty bourgeoisie in both town and country, whose interests clash with those of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

Since it is a reflection of the contradictions in the basis, the superstructure of an antagonistic class society also contains contradictions. It includes the ideas and institutions of different classes and social groups, but the ideas and institutions of the class which dominates economically prevail. "...The class, which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force,"* wrote Marx and Engels.

Under capitalism the bourgeoisie dominates economically and therefore bourgeois ideas and institutions prevail and are used by the bourgeoisie to fight the proletariat and to perpetuate its own rule.

In capitalist society the bourgeoisie, however, is opposed by the proletariat which forms its own ideas and sets up its own institutions. Gradually the workers begin to understand the essence of capitalism and become aware of the need to abolish it. They set up their own organisations to fight the bourgeoisie—a political party, trade unions, co-operatives, and so on. In the course of the revolutionary struggle the proletariat masters Marxist the-

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* Marx, Engels, *The German Ideology*, New York International Publishers, p. 39.

ory, creates its own morality, its own political, legal and aesthetic views.

The determining role of the basis in relation to the superstructure is manifested not only in the basis giving rise to the superstructure, but also in the essential changes in the economic system necessarily leading to changes in the superstructure. During the transition from pre-monopoly capitalism to imperialism, for example, the capitalist economy underwent important changes: free competition gave way to monopoly. The bourgeois superstructure also changed accordingly. In a number of countries the capitalist class went over and is going over from bourgeois democratic forms of government to reactionary—fascist or semi-fascist forms. The rights of the working people are being increasingly curtailed and Communist parties and progressive organisations are being persecuted. Bourgeois art and philosophy are degenerating and the most reactionary forms of idealism are on the ascendant.

The changes in the superstructure are especially deep when one economic basis supersedes another as a result of social revolution. In the course of a revolution the political rule of the old class is replaced by the rule of the new class. A new state machinery (the system of political and legal institutions) is created in place of the old one. Social consciousness changes: the old ideology is ousted by the new corresponding to the new basis. "The old 'superstructure' falls apart," Lenin wrote, "and ... a new one is created by the independent action of the most diverse social forces."*

### *Relative Independence and Active Role of the Superstructure*

The superstructure, brought into being by the basis, also possesses *relative independence* which is manifested in the *continuity* of its development. A revolution in the superstructure, which takes place when the old basis is replaced by the new, does not signify the automatic elimination of all the features of the old superstructure. With the des-

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 146.

truction of the old basis, the old superstructure as a whole, as a system of views and institutions of the old society, ceases to exist. But its individual features outlive the basis which gave rise to the old superstructure and, passing into the superstructure of the new society, serve the classes of this new society and meet their interests. The Christian religion, for example, which arose in slave society, loyally served the feudal lords and is now serving the bourgeoisie.

The superstructure of any society also has non-transitory features which are important for all mankind. These include man's general moral standards and the finest creations of literature and art.

Because of its continuity, the superstructure of each society is very complex. It incorporates both the ideas and institutions inherited from the old society and the ideas and institutions which grew up on its current economic basis.

The relative independence of the superstructure is also seen in that, having arisen on the economic basis, it plays an *active part* in the development of this basis. The ideas and institutions prevailing in an antagonistic class society serve to protect and strengthen its basis. They are intended to justify the rule of the class which brought them into being and whose interests they are destined to defend. In antagonistic societies these ideas and institutions are the theoretical means of sanctifying and organising the struggle of the ruling class against other classes, above all against the working classes, stifling their desire for liberation from exploitation, colonial and other oppression.

When the capitalist basis was taking root, the ideas and institutions of the bourgeoisie actively contributed to its development and consolidation and were a powerful weapon in the struggle against the feudal class. At present bourgeois ideas and institutions are used for crushing all the progressive forces in order to preserve the capitalist basis at any cost, to prevent or at least postpone the fall of capitalism. Contemporary capitalism is preserved above all because its interests are guarded by the bourgeois state and law, by all the media of ideological influence which play an extremely big role in the defence of capitalism.

## 2. The Basis and the Superstructure of Socialist Society

In the previous chapter, we examined the particular features of the rise of the socialist mode of production and described how socialist relations of production, the economic basis of socialism, take shape. The socialist basis is not engendered within capitalism; only the prerequisites for its birth are created under capitalism.

The socialist basis is not built up spontaneously, as was the case in preceding antagonistic class societies, but is formed by the actions of the socialist state. The energetic, socially conscious activity of the working people, headed by the proletariat and its Marxist-Leninist party, plays a decisive part in the creation of this basis.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the winning of political power by the working class, is a necessary requisite for building the economic basis of socialism. The proletarian state concentrates the basic means of production in its hands and organises, in a planned way, the creation of socialist production relations in town and country. The country's industrialisation and the collectivisation of agriculture are major stages in building the economic basis of socialism.

As the socialist basis grows the superstructure also gains in strength. The state apparatus is developed and improved, and science and art attain a high degree of development. The social consciousness of the people is remoulded and the principles of communist morality take root. With the victory of socialism and the entrenchment of the socialist basis, the process of forming the socialist superstructure also comes to an end.

In contrast to the basis, individual features of the socialist superstructure appear within capitalism. Marxist-Leninist theory, the party of the working class, trade unions, proletarian morality, literature and art arise at the time when the capitalist basis still prevails; they then pass into the superstructure of socialist society. The superstructure assimilates the finest achievements of science, culture and philosophy of all preceding eras. All these features, however, do not constitute the socialist super-

structure in its entirety, as the sum-total of ideas, institutions and organisations. The socialist superstructure as a whole is only formed with the creation of the socialist basis.

Let us see how the superstructure of Soviet socialist society was formed. The mainstays of the socialist basis were created in the first months of Soviet power when the chief means of production were nationalised. About the same time the old state machine was thoroughly demolished and the proletarian state—a primary feature of the socialist superstructure—was set up. The Council of People's Commissars was formed on October 26, 1917; in December 1917, the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission, a body for combating counter-revolution and sabotage, was organised; the decree on the organisation of the Red Army was signed on January 15, 1918, and of the Red Navy, on February 14. All government agencies in the centre and localities were set up at that time.

*The Socialist superstructure* consists of the sum-total of socialist ideology and its corresponding institutions—the socialist state, the Communist Party, trade unions, Young Communist League, cultural, educational, sport, defence and other organisations.

The superstructure of socialist society radically differs from the superstructure of antagonistic class societies, particularly of contemporary capitalism.

The progressive socialist basis also determines the essence of the socialist superstructure, its effective, revolutionary, transforming nature. Reflecting the real course of history, the law-governed movement of mankind from capitalism to communism, the socialist superstructure in every way facilitates this movement, strengthens and develops the socialist basis.

The superstructure of socialist society has no antagonistic contradictions. This is determined by the unity and harmony of the socialist basis. In socialist society there are no classes which would be the vehicle of reactionary ideas. All the working people are interested in the development of socialist society, in its advance to communism. All of them strive to strengthen the economic basis of socialism, to develop and improve its superstructure.

In socialist society, too, backward ideas can still be found. But they are not, and could not be, a part of the socialist superstructure because they were inherited from capitalism and do not stem from the essence of the socialist basis.

The socialist superstructure has a genuinely democratic character. It expresses and upholds the interests of the working people, and in turn enjoys their constant support. This is the source of the socialist superstructure's activity, the great influence it exercises on the development of the basis, on the entire progress of socialist society. As Soviet society advances to communism the significance of the superstructure and its influence on the development of the basis and society as a whole are steadily rising. The socialist superstructure, above all its primary components—the Soviet state and the Communist Party which organise the country's economic, political and cultural life—is an important factor in the successful building of communism.

*CHAPTER XIV*

# THE PEOPLE — THE DECISIVE FORCE IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY

We stated earlier that society develops on the basis of its own laws, historical necessity. But social laws are always manifested through the actions of people who make their own history.

Of what importance are people in the historical process, and what is the role of the people and the individual in history?

Historical materialism proceeds from the premise that the people are the makers of history. Let us find out why it is that people make history and what part the individual plays in social development.

## 1. The People Are the Real Makers of History, the Decisive Force in Social Development

### *What We Understand by the People*

In order to explain the people's role as the makers of history we must first be clear about what we mean by the people.

The people are not some concept which is immutable, stands outside of history and is fixed once and for all. Nor are they a grey, motley "mass", "the rabble", hostile to any civilisation and progress, as the ideologists of the exploiting classes claim.

*The people above all are those who work; in an antagonistic class society they are the exploited.* In slave society these were chiefly the slaves, and in feudal society they were the serfs and artisans. In capitalist society the people include the working class, the peasants, the working intellectuals and other groups which contribute to social progress.

In an antagonistic class society the people constitute the majority of the population, but not the entire population. In contemporary bourgeois society, for example, opposite the people stands the reactionary imperialist ruling class.

In socialist society the entire population—the working class, peasants and intelligentsia—are the people.

### *The People Are the Makers of History*

The decisive significance of the people in the historical process stems from the determining role played by the mode of production in society's development. Material production, as we have learned earlier, is the basis of social life, and the working people are the chief productive force. The people consequently are the *decisive force* in social development, the *real makers* of history.

In what way is the people's role in history manifested?

The working people make history first and foremost by their productive labour. It is they who produce all the material wealth: the towns and villages, factories and mills, roads and bridges, motors and machines, clothing and footwear, food and household utensils, in a word, everything without which we could not exist.

The people are the main driving force of technical progress. Painstakingly and perseveringly, from day to day, from year to year, from century to century, often unaware of it themselves, they have devised and perfected the implements of labour, and this in the final count has led to radical technical revolutions, to changes in the productive forces. The development of the productive forces, in its turn, has brought about a change in the mode of production as a whole. Even under the most onerous oppression, the labour of the ordinary people has prepared the material

prerequisites for mankind's progress, for the transition to a new social system.

The people's role in history, however, is not limited to developing the productive forces and thereby preparing the material conditions for the transition to a new social system. The people are also the *main force* deciding the fate of social revolutions, of political and national-liberation movements. The class struggle, above all the working people's struggle against their oppressors, of which the social revolution is the highest form, serves as the driving force in the development of antagonistic class societies. Slave uprisings undermined the foundations of slave society and were a prime cause of the transition to feudalism. The serfs and the urban poor were an important driving force in the bourgeois revolutions which made feudalism give way to the more progressive, capitalist system.

In pre-socialist societies the people did not enjoy the fruits of their labour, but their work and struggle were the principal factors which ultimately led to the emancipation of the working people and the birth of the advanced, socialist system.

The people have made a tremendous contribution to the development of mankind's spiritual culture. "The people," Maxim Gorky wrote, "are not merely the force which has created all material values; they are the exclusive and inexhaustible source of spiritual values; they are the first and foremost philosopher and poet in point of time, beauty and genius, the creator of all the great poems that exist, all the tragedies in the world, and, greatest among these tragedies, the history of world culture."

The people's labour, their creative endeavours are the spring of science and culture. Many prominent scientists and writers, artists and other leading figures in the field of culture whose great creations have enriched mankind, have come from among the ordinary people. Such, for example, were Lomonosov, the son of a northern fisherman, Newton, son of a small farmer. The Cherepanovs, father and son, who developed the first locomotive in Russia, were serfs. The people create remarkable epic poems and fairy tales, songs and dances which bring the greatest enjoy-

ment. The most outstanding artists have always taken the models for their finest works from the inexhaustible treasure-house of folk art.

### *Growing Role of the People in Historical Development*

The people make history; they do not make it at will, but in accordance with the objective conditions, and above all the mode of production which is historically determined. Since material production constantly develops from the lower to the higher, the people's role in the historical process also changes. Moreover, *as mankind progressively develops, the people's role in history rises.* Marxism has established that the deeper the social transformations, the more important the tasks facing society, the *larger* is the number of people taking part in the historical process and the *more active* the people are. "With the thoroughness of the historical action," Marx wrote, "the size of the mass whose action it is will ... increase."*

In slave and feudal societies the working people were deprived of the most elementary human rights and their creative powers were ruthlessly suppressed. The slave-owners and feudal lords monopolised the state administration, politics, science and art, kept the people in darkness and ignorance, dooming them to unbearable toil. The people's activity in those days was relatively restricted and their actions against the exploiters were doomed to failure. At that time history could only crawl at a painfully slow pace.

The material prerequisites for the emancipation of the working people from exploitation are created under capitalism. Large-scale machine production appears along with the proletariat, the class capable of leading the people in the fight against capitalism and achieving the victory of socialism. This class creates the Communist Party which is guided by the theory of Marxism-Leninism and heads the revolutionary struggle of the working people. For these reasons the people play a bigger part in life under capitalism. Millions upon millions of working people are drawn

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* Marx, Engels, *The Holy Family*, Moscow, 1956, p. 110.

into active political struggle and this considerably accelerates the course of history.

The working people are the main driving force in the socialist revolution. In contrast to preceding revolutions in which the people only destroyed the old social system, in the course of the socialist revolution they not only demolish the old, capitalist society, but also create the new, socialist society.

The people's activity and their role in social life is particularly great in socialist society. Socialism satisfies the most pressing needs of the working people and that is why they are vitally interested in building it. "Socialism, living, constructive, is created by the masses themselves," Lenin wrote.* *Greater activity of the people in building the new life is a law of socialist development.* It has been strikingly displayed in the Soviet Union, the first country in which socialism triumphed.

The role of the people in socialist conditions greatly increases due mainly to the *very nature of the socialist system*, the dominance of socialist production relations. Socialist ownership, which is now firmly entrenched in the Soviet Union, unites, welds together all sections of the working people and ensures their active participation in building communism.

The harmonious combination of social and personal interests, the material interest of the working people in the results of their labour is only attained under socialism. In capitalist society the working people produce the greatest material and spiritual values, are the main participants in all progressive social movements, but the fruits of their labour and struggle are appropriated by a handful of exploiters. The situation is different in socialist society: here the workers are vitally interested in strengthening and developing the socialist system because it is the basis of their political freedom, material well-being and cultural progress. "For the first time after centuries of working for others, of working in subjection for the exploiter," Lenin wrote, "it has become possible *to work for oneself* and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 255.

technique and culture in one's work."* The people are aware that they work for themselves, for their own society, and this is the source of their enthusiasm for work, it stimulates their initiative, pioneering endeavours and socialist emulation.

The people's role under socialism increases due also to the *immensity of the tasks* confronting them in building communism. The victory of communism will signify a gigantic leap in society's development, it will be a result of vast, unparalleled changes in all spheres of social life; and all this is absolutely inconceivable without the energetic participation of the millions of working people.

*The leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* is a *primary* factor enhancing the people's role in socialist society. The Party equips the Soviet people with a scientific policy based on objective laws and taking into account the requirements of society's material life. Acting on the basis of the current production level, of the real possibilities, the Party sets the people further tasks and indicates the ways to carry them out. The Party educates the people constantly, stimulates their activities and seeks to enlist them on an ever wider scale in building the new society.

## 2. The Role of the Individual in History

Because Marxists recognise historical necessity, bourgeois ideologists often accuse them of denying the role of great people, of leaders, in history. These accusations are unfounded, and Marxism far from underestimates the role of the individual. Although Marxists maintain that individuals cannot change the objective course of history at will, they admit that the individual plays no small part in social development. "The idea of historical necessity," Lenin noted, "does not in the least undermine the role of the individual in history: all history is made up of the actions of individuals, who are undoubtedly active figures."** Only Marxism has demonstrated the real importance of

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 1, 1951, p. 368.
** Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 159.

the individual in social development and has also indicated the conditions in which the individual can play an important part in history.

### *The Role of Leaders in History*

We know that the people, the masses make history. The people are divided into classes, which in the course of the class struggle organise their own political parties from whose ranks come leaders, the most experienced, trained and active members. The role of these leaders in history consists in organising the people, rousing them to action, setting them definite tasks and mobilising them to carry out these tasks.

The more active the masses are and the wider the circle of people who make history, the more pressing is the need for experienced, mature leaders. Without leaders the advanced class is incapable of gaining political power, maintaining and consolidating its rule, building its own state and fighting its political enemies successfully. "Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise a movement and lead it,"* Lenin wrote.

The role of leaders, of ideologists is particularly great in the proletariat's revolutionary movement. For the working class, organisation and iron discipline are the most important means for achieving the aims confronting it. And an organisation is inconceivable without experienced and battle-hardened leaders. Without highly authoritative leaders, intrepid organisers and wise ideologists, the working-class movement could not have found the right ways and means of fighting the exploiters.

### *Why Outstanding Personalities Appear and What Is the Source of Their Strength*

Great people do not appear by chance but by historical necessity, when the corresponding objective conditions are ripe. Outstanding political figures, leaders of the people,

* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 371.

come to the fore in a period of radical revolutionary changes in society, very great political actions and popular uprisings. Men of genius appear in science most often when production requires some great scientific discovery. Great artists, as a rule, display their talent at the most significant turning points in history. Moreover, a talented person will go down in history only if his capabilities, character and intellect are needed by society at a given stage of its development.

The appearance of an outstanding personality when there is a need for him is a necessity, but the fact that in the given conditions *this particular individual* came to the fore is a matter of chance. "That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance," Engels wrote. "But cut him out and there will be a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found."* He is found only when the social prerequisites, the corresponding economic and political conditions for his appearance are ripe.

Many names are recorded in history, but far from all of them were really great. There were men who acted contrary to historical necessity and sought to set the clock back. These men, by expressing the interests of reactionary classes, inevitably suffered defeat together with the evil cause they championed.

A man can only be *truly* great if he dedicates his entire life and all his energies to society's progress, if he, without sparing any effort, works for the new and tirelessly helps the advanced classes of society to introduce a progressive social system.

Why is an outstanding personality capable of accomplishing such great and difficult tasks? What is the source of his strength?

An outstanding personality's strength above all lies in the strength of the progressive social movement which he champions and leads. A great man is great because he understands the objective course of the historical process, sees the requirements of society's development and knows

* Marx, Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, p. 550.

how to satisfy these requirements, how to improve social life. An outstanding personality is strong because he serves the interests of the advanced classes, the people, and therefore enjoys their trust and support.

The personal qualities of a great man are of no little importance. Only a man endowed with uncommon capabilities and personal qualities—great intellect, inexhaustible energy, resolution and bravery—can cope with the tasks history sets him. The fuller the personal qualities of a great man correspond to social needs, the more notable and important is his role in history.

The leaders of the proletariat and all the working people, Marx, Engels and Lenin, were outstanding personalities who left a deep imprint on history. They were leaders of a qualitatively new type, splendid theoreticians and organisers of the greatest movement of the people, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. They had resolution and bravery, unshakable inner conviction in the justice of the communist cause, love for the people and hatred for their enemies. They were closely bound up with the people, taught them and in turn learned from the people, generalising their rich revolutionary experience.

The great cause initiated by them is being successfully continued by their disciples and followers, prominent leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the other fraternal Communist and Workers' parties who are heading the most powerful movement of our age, the people's movement towards communism.

### *Marxism Is Incompatible with the Personality Cult*

Marxism recognises the big part played by outstanding personalities in history and examines their activities in close connection with the activities of the people, the advanced classes and political parties. Marxism is incompatible with the personality cult, the blind worship of a great man allegedly endowed with superhuman ability to make history at his own will. The personality cult runs counter to socialist ideology and inflicts much harm on the communist movement. Marx, Engels and Lenin always

opposed the personality cult and spoke up against the exaggeration of the role of individual leaders, against showering praise and flattery on them. The founders of Marxism-Leninism held that only collective leadership ensures the revolutionary movement's success.

What makes the personality cult harmful is that it belittles both the people's role as makers of history and the role of the Communist Party and its central bodies as the collective leaders of the people. It fetters the development of the party's ideological life and the creative energies of the people, accustoms them to passively waiting for orders from above. The personality cult and the consequent violations of the principle of collective leadership, of democracy within the party and of socialist law are deeply alien to the democratic nature of socialism which is characterised by sovereignty of the people, and not by the omnipotence of one individual.

The personality cult implants arm-chair bureaucratic methods of leadership, administration by mere injunction, and stifles criticism and self-criticism. This curtails the possibilities for the extensive participation of the people in the communist movement and belittles the importance of their initiative. Yet communism can only be built with the most energetic participation of the people. That is why the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has so determinedly denounced the cult of Stalin's personality and its consequences.

The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. condemned the cult of Stalin's personality as alien to Marxism-Leninism, to the socialist system, and urged the Party to uproot its consequences. The anti-Party group of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich and their accomplices opposed the Leninist line of the 20th Congress and sought to revive the methods which had prevailed during Stalin's personality cult. That is why the question of the personality cult was discussed at the 21st and especially 22nd Congress of the Party which vigorously condemned the subversive activities of the anti-Party group. The Party cast aside the bankrupt factionalists, rallied its ranks still closer, reinforced its bonds with the people and mobilised all forces to carry out its general line.

The firmness and determination, with which the Party, supported by all the Soviet people, fought against the personality cult has demonstrated the strength and vitality of the Soviet socialist system, the invincibility of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

While resolutely condemning the personality cult, Marxism-Leninism holds that it would be wrong and harmful to confuse it with the authority of leaders. Lenin wrote that "the working class, which all over the world is waging a hard and persistent struggle for complete emancipation, needs authorities."* Marxism-Leninism calls for safeguarding the authority of leaders devoted to the people and to the Party, who dedicate all their knowledge and energies, their rich experience to the great cause of communism.

All historical development shows that however great an individual is, he is incapable of determining the course of history. It is the people who are the makers of history and the producers of all the material and spiritual wealth of mankind.

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, p. 412.

*CHAPTER XV*

# CLASSES AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

In the previous chapter we showed that the people are the chief and decisive force in society's development. Society, however, is not homogeneous, it is made up of definite classes, social groups and social sections.

What are classes and what is their role in social development? This question is answered by the Marxist-Leninist theory of classes and the class struggle.

## 1. The Essence and Origin of Classes

Before the birth of Marxism scholars realised that people were divided into classes and that the class struggle existed in society. But, being idealists in their understanding of social life, they were unable to find the objective basis for the division of society into classes. They did not see that the reason for the class division of society should be sought in material production, the principal sphere of human relations.

A comprehensive definition of classes was given by Lenin in his work *A Great Beginning*. "Classes," he wrote, "are large groups of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their

role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions and mode of acquiring the share of social wealth of which they dispose. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."*

*The relation of a class to the means of production* is its chief feature determining its place and role in social production, and also the way it obtains its income and the size of that income.

Classes have not always existed. In primitive society, as we mentioned earlier, there were no classes. Production was at such a low level that it yielded only means of subsistence barely enough to keep the people from starvation. There was no possibility for accumulating material wealth, for the birth of private property, classes and exploitation.

Subsequently, however, as the productive forces developed and labour productivity increased, people began to produce more than they consumed. It became possible to accumulate material wealth and appropriate means of production. Private property appeared, which was facilitated by the increasing division of labour and the growth of trade.

The development of private property in place of communal property increased the people's economic inequality. Some men, mainly the clan chiefs, became rich and seized the communal means of production. Others, deprived of the means of production, were compelled to work for those who became their owners. This is how the disintegration and the class stratification of the primitive community took place. This process was consummated in the birth of opposing classes and exploitation.

Classes arose when the primitive-communal system was disintegrating and the slave system was emerging. The antithetical position of classes in society was the source of their bitter struggle. For many centuries the class struggle became the primary feature in the development of mankind.

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, Moscow, 1951, p. 224.

## 2. The Class Struggle as the Source of Development of Antagonistic Class Societies

The history of antagonistic class societies is the history of the class struggle. "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes."*

The struggle of antagonistic classes is irreconcilable because of the basic differences in their economic and political positions in society. For countless centuries the working people, whether slaves, peasants or industrial workers, have been brutally exploited by the ruling classes and it is natural that they should struggle against oppression and strive for a free and happy life.

A class society has basic and non-basic classes. The *basic classes* are those connected with the mode of production prevailing in society. In an antagonistic class society they are, on the one hand, the class owning the means of production and, on the other, the oppressed class standing in opposition to it. Slaves and slave-owners in slave society, peasants and feudal lords under feudalism, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie under capitalism—these are the basic classes in antagonistic societies.

Antagonistic societies also contain *non-basic classes* which are not directly connected with the prevailing mode of production (free artisans in slave society, peasants in capitalist society and others), and also various social groups (the intelligentsia, clergy and others).

The class struggle in an antagonistic society takes place above all between the basic social classes. The non-basic classes and social groups usually have no line of their own in the struggle and side with one of the basic antagonistic classes and defend its interests.

*The class struggle is the driving force, the source of development of an antagonistic class society.* This struggle deter-

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* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1955, p. 34.

mines the development of an antagonistic society both in relatively "peaceful" periods and particularly in periods of revolutionary storm and stress.

In capitalist conditions the class struggle is an important factor in the development of the productive forces. Were it not for the struggle of the workers, for example, the capitalists would be less concerned with the development of technology. It would be much simpler and cheaper for them to extract profit by such tried and tested methods as prolonging the working day and cutting wages. But the stubborn struggle of the workers, in addition to competition between the capitalists, forces the latter to introduce new machinery and advanced technology. "... Almost all the new inventions were the result of collisions between the worker and the employer... After each new strike of any importance, there appeared a new machine," Marx wrote.*

The class struggle is even more important in the political life of an antagonistic society. The struggle of the working class in the present period, for example, is an important obstacle in the way of the sinister schemes of the imperialists to unleash another world war, to crush the national-liberation movement, abolish the remnants of democratic freedom and thereby retard society's progressive development.

Without the class struggle there would be no social progress. Society's progressive development is usually faster, the more stubborn and organised is the struggle of the exploited against the exploiters. The social revolution, the highest form of the class struggle, plays a particularly great part in social progress and results in the destruction of the old and the establishment of a new, more progressive social system.

There was a bitter struggle between the slaves and the slave-owners in slave society which took on the most diverse forms from breaking tools to mass uprisings, like that led by Spartacus (first century B. C.) involving more than 100,000 slaves.

The class struggle became keener under feudalism, when the peasants and the feudal lords were the main contending

* Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, p. 157.

classes, the urban working people, specifically the artisans, often joining the side of the peasants. Uprisings turned into peasant wars in which hundreds of thousands of people were involved. These wars often spread over vast territories and lasted for many years, like Wat Tyler's Revolt in England (14th century), the Jacquerie in France (14th-15th centuries), the Peasant War in Germany (16th century), the uprisings headed by Bolotnikov and Razin (17th century) and Pugachov (18th century) in Russia, the Taiping Rebellion in China (19th century), and so on.

The uprisings of the oppressed in slave and feudal societies, however, could not put an end to exploitation, because the conditions were not yet ripe for this. The level of production did not permit the change to a system without exploitation and oppression. These uprisings were unorganised, the rebels had no clear idea either of the aims of the struggle or the ways of achieving them. They had no progressive theory to illuminate their road, nor their own party. As we shall see later, these conditions are only created under capitalism.

Nevertheless, the slave and peasant uprisings played a big and progressive part in history. The slaves undermined the mainstays of slave society, the serfs were one of the principal forces which brought about the fall of feudalism and the transition to the more progressive, capitalist system.

## 3. The Class Struggle in Capitalist Society

### *The Struggle Between the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat—a Law of Capitalist Development*

The bourgeoisie and the proletariat are the basic classes in capitalist society. The bourgeoisie, in quest of profit, exploits the proletariat and this exploitation is intensified as capitalism develops. The worker's labour is increasingly speeded up and he is reduced to a mere appendage of the machine. The proletariat especially suffers from such intrinsic features of capitalism as economic crises, unemployment and predatory wars.

The working class naturally cannot reconcile itself to all this. The nature of capitalism which robs the worker of the fruits of his labour and the worker's position in society impel him to fight the bourgeoisie. The history of capitalist society is therefore the history of struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This struggle is law-governed and is the primary source of capitalist development. The struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie grows especially keen in the epoch of imperialism when the economic and political contradictions of capitalism become extremely acute.

It is the proletariat's mission to *abolish capitalism and build a classless communist society*, for no other class is consistently revolutionary.

The bourgeoisie was only revolutionary when it fought the feudal lords for domination in society. But having captured power, it became more and more reactionary, and now its sole aim is to perpetuate exploitation.

The middle sections, in particular the peasants and artisans who are quite numerous under capitalism, are not revolutionary to the end. They hold no independent position in society and, with the development of capitalism, they become stratified. The majority of the peasants and artisans is ruined and joins the ranks of the proletariat; only a negligible number breaks its way into the capitalist class. In the fierce class struggle the peasants vacillate. The proletariat therefore has the task of winning them over to its side and making them its reliable allies.

The intelligentsia (engineers and technicians, doctors, teachers, scientists and others) cannot be consistently revolutionary either. The overwhelming majority of intellectuals is compelled to serve the exploiting classes.

The proletariat is the only consistently revolutionary class in capitalist society. It is connected with the most progressive form of production, machine industry, and is constantly growing and developing. The very nature of capitalist production helps unite, organise and educate the working class. The workers are deprived of property and have nothing to lose in the struggle. In fighting for its liberation, the proletariat is capable of organising and leading all other working people who share its hatred

for the capitalist system. By emancipating itself, it emancipates all other working people and abolishes for ever exploitation of man by man. On gaining victory, it returns to the working people everything they produce, eliminating thereby the greatest social injustice—a social system in which a handful of oppressors appropriate the fruits of labour of the millions.

### *Forms of the Class Struggle of the Proletariat*

As capitalism develops so does the proletariat, and the forms of its struggle against the bourgeoisie become more diverse and acute. There are three main forms of the proletariat's class struggle—economic, political and ideological.

*Economic struggle*, the effort of the proletariat to improve material and working conditions, is the simplest form most accessible to the workers. They demand higher wages, shorter hours and so on from the employers and if these demands are not met they go on strike.

The economic struggle, historically the first form of the proletariat's class struggle, plays a big part in the development of the revolutionary movement. It helps to draw the mass of workers into the class struggle and serves as a good school of organisation for them. The class consciousness of the workers and their class solidarity grow in the course of the struggle, and the first workers' organisations—trade unions, co-operatives, mutual benefit societies—appear.

At the same time the economic struggle is restricted in character. This is not yet the struggle of the entire working class against the bourgeoisie as a class, but clashes of groups of workers with one capitalist at a factory in a particular district. Moreover—and this is the main thing—it does not affect the basis of capitalism, private property, and does not aim to overthrow the political rule of the bourgeoisie. The purpose of this struggle is not to abolish exploitation, but merely to restrict and mitigate it.

With the growth of the proletariat, the economic struggle of the workers in individual factories and districts merges

into the common struggle of the working class against the capitalist class as a whole. The class struggle enters its higher, political form.

*Political struggle* is the struggle for the demolition of the mainstays of the capitalist system, for state power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Through economic struggle the proletariat can somewhat improve its material conditions, can wrest some economic concessions from the bourgeoisie. But it can only satisfy its fundamental economic and political interests and abolish exploitation forever by destroying the political rule of the bourgeoisie and establishing its own power, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is to achieve this aim that the proletariat wages the *political struggle*, employing the most diverse means: political strikes and demonstrations, peaceful parliamentary struggle and armed struggle. All these means, however, are in the final count subordinated to preparing and carrying out the socialist revolution. The socialist, proletarian revolution is the highest stage in the class struggle of the working class, the decisive and sole means for the proletariat to abolish capitalism and gain political power.

Of great importance in the proletariat's revolutionary movement is the *ideological struggle*, i.e., the struggle against bourgeois ideology which dominates capitalist society, and the struggle for the victory of the socialist, proletarian ideology.

The development of capitalism inevitably leads to the solidarity and organisation of the proletariat. But to abolish the capitalist system the proletariat must not only organise as a class, but also become conscious of its class interests, of its great historic mission. For this, revolutionary theory is needed. The proletariat itself, owing to the lack of time, resources and education at its disposal, was unable to create this theory. It was elaborated by intellectuals who sided with the proletariat. This new revolutionary theory was created by Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The task, however, was not only to elaborate a progressive revolutionary theory, it was necessary to spread it among the workers. Ideological struggle consequently is struggle against spontaneity in the working-class move-

ment, struggle for the mastery of advanced Marxist-Leninist ideology by the working masses.

Marxist-Leninist theory is constantly being attacked by the ideologists of the bourgeoisie, by reformists and revisionists. An important part of the ideological struggle therefore consists in the effort to keep the Marxist-Leninist theory pure and to defend it from all enemies, above all from the ideology of imperialist reaction.

As in economic struggle, struggle in the ideological sphere is not an aim in itself; it is subordinated to political tasks, to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and gaining power by the proletariat.

### *The Marxist Party As the Organiser and Leader of the Proletariat's Class Struggle*

Only the political party of the proletariat is capable of giving competent leadership to the working people's struggle and properly combining all its forms. The party's role is particularly great in the imperialist era when, owing to the extreme aggravation of capitalist contradictions, the socialist revolution becomes a direct, practical task.

The parties of the Second International who favoured reforms and compromise with the bourgeoisie were unable to provide proper leadership to the proletarian movement in the new historical conditions. A party of a new type, a revolutionary, Marxist party was needed and such a party was founded by Lenin.

The Marxist party is the advanced revolutionary detachment of the proletariat, its vanguard. As the highest form of organisation of the proletariat, it rallies together all its other organisations (trade unions, co-operatives, etc.), gives them a political leadership and concentrates their efforts on the single goal of overthrowing capitalism and building socialist society. "By educating the workers' party," Lenin wrote, "Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat which is capable of assuming power and of *leading the whole people* to socialism, of directing and organising the new order, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the toilers and exploited in the task of

building up their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie."*

The Marxist party is capable of fulfilling its mission as the vanguard, the advanced detachment of the working class and leader of the entire people because it is equipped with scientific Marxist theory, knowledge of the laws of social development and ability to apply these laws in practice for the revolutionary transformation of society.

As the advanced, politically conscious detachment of the proletariat, the party constantly develops the people's socialist consciousness and protects the working class from the influence of corrupting bourgeois ideology; the party wages an implacable struggle against any attempt to falsify or "revise" Marxism and it develops Marxist theory in the light of the latest scientific achievements and the practical experience of society.

The Marxist party is the advanced, conscious and organised detachment of the working class bound by a common desire to apply the revolutionary ideas of Marxism-Leninism in practice. The party abhors all kinds of opportunists who seek to destroy its unity, to undermine it from within and render it incapable of leading the proletariat's class struggle.

The Marxist party is a genuine people's party, it unites the finest representatives of the people and it is bound by thousands of threads with the working people. By expressing the people's innermost aspirations and selflessly defending their vital interests, the party enjoys their boundless confidence and support. The Marxist party draws its invincible strength and support from its close ties with the people. Revolutionary and genuine people's parties are typified by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the fraternal Communist and Workers' parties in the other socialist countries which organise socialist and communist construction and also the Marxist parties in the capitalist countries which inspire and lead the people's struggle against imperialism and colonialism, for peace, democracy and socialism.

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 1, 1951, p. 224.

## *The Bankruptcy of Bourgeois and Revisionist Theories of Classes and Class Struggle*

In contrast to the Marxist theory of classes and the class struggle, bourgeois ideologists preach class peace under capitalism. They especially persist in denying the existence of classes and the class struggle in contemporary bourgeois society.

Some sociologists claim outright that in present-day capitalist society there is neither exploitation nor hostile classes, that there are only social groups according to profession, education, income, age, religious and political views and a number of other features. No property relations apparently connect people belonging to these groups, and relations between them are completely harmonious. A man can easily move from one group to another at will.

Other sociologists, though they admit that classes exist, maintain that in contemporary bourgeois society class distinctions are being eliminated and classes are gradually converging into one huge "middle" class. They say, for example, that in the United States very shortly everyone will belong to this "middle" class. Strausz Hupé, an American sociologist, in his book *Zone of Indifference* (1952) states that in present-day America it is difficult to find any difference between exploiters and exploited. Poverty is apparently disappearing, and the idea of an upper class is becoming an anachronism.

The ideologists of the bourgeoisie claim that the American workers are no longer proletarians, that they have a high standard of living, make savings, they buy shares and therefore, like the factory owners, get the profits. On the other hand, the rights of employers are supposedly becoming more and more restricted by the state, as a result of which they play a smaller part in production.

Apologists for capitalism, in their fairy stories about the absence of classes and the class struggle in contemporary bourgeois society have eager supporters in the reformists and revisionists. Philip Murray, a leader of the American trade union organisation, CIO, wrote that in America there were no classes, that "all are workers" and in fact the interests

of the farmers, industrial workers, businessmen, office employees and intellectuals all coincided.

Murray is echoed by the revisionists, who brand Lenin's definition of classes as obsolete and replace it by concepts like "group", etc. People, they maintain, unite in groups, not according to their relation to the means of production, but according to other, secondary considerations. The revisionists not only deny that classes exist but renounce the class struggle. The Italian revisionist Antonio Giolitti, for example, claims that the workers' task today is not to fight the bourgeoisie but to promote technical progress which will supposedly place power in the hands of the people automatically without the class struggle and revolution.

The apologists of the bourgeoisie and their revisionist yes-men, by spreading fraudulent theories about the absence of classes and the class struggle in contemporary bourgeois society and proclaiming an era of "harmony of interests of labour and capital", seek to mislead the working class, to make the workers think that the class struggle against the bourgeoisie is futile and to direct the working-class movement along the reformist path.

What is the true state of affairs?

It is quite true that the standard of living of some American workers, above all the upper section, is high, particularly in comparison with that of the working class in other capitalist countries. But we must not forget that far from all American workers enjoy this high standard. Millions of the unemployed, Negroes, Mexicans and other workers do not get enough even for minimum subsistence. At the same time one per cent of the American population, the monopoly bourgeoisie, own almost 60 per cent of the entire national wealth of the United States; about 150 capitalist tycoons get an annual income of more than one million dollars each.

Some American workers have savings. But what is their share in the total savings? Half of the population owns only one per cent of the savings, while the other half owns the remaining 99 per cent.

Some American workers own shares as well. But the market value of all the shares they own only amounts to 0.2

per cent of the value of all the shareholdings in the United States and is only one-tenth of the value of the shares owned by one family of the financial oligarchy, the Du Ponts.

In the face of these facts, how can they speak of the disappearance of classes, of the "great American middle class"! The United States is a country of vast social contrasts and deep social contradictions. In most other capitalist countries the working people are in a much worse position than in the United States and the contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are deeper and sharper.

It is beyond doubt that capitalist ownership prevails in contemporary bourgeois society; consequently there exist antagonistic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the fierce struggle between them continues.

### *The Class Struggle in Contemporary Capitalist Society*

The class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries is now waged at a new stage of capitalism's general crisis, when the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in world development. This situation has become more favourable for the working-class movement due to the successes of the Soviet Union and the entire world socialist system, the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism, the increase in the influence of the Communist parties among the people and the ideological bankruptcy of reformism. The possibilities for the working-class movement have been further extended by the people's dissatisfaction with the reactionary policy of the imperialists, particularly the fanning of war psychosis and the arms race, the main brunt of which is borne by the people. More and more people are becoming convinced that socialism is the only way out of their predicament and this creates favourable conditions for drawing them into the active struggle against the bourgeoisie. The power of the proletarian movement is multiplied by the achievements of the socialist system, which clearly show socialism's advantages over capitalism. These achievements inspire the workers in the capitalist countries in their struggle

and make them confident in the coming victory of socialism.

The struggle of the proletariat for socialism is now combined with the movement of the peoples for peace, national independence and democracy, and this is the main, specific feature of the working-class movement today. Taking advantage of the favourable situation, the working class in many countries, even before the overthrow of capitalism, is able to compel the ruling circles to end preparations for another war, to refrain from starting local wars and to utilise the economic resources for peaceful purposes; it can repulse the onslaught of fascist reaction and bring about the adoption of general national programmes which call for peace, national independence, democratic rights and certain improvements in the people's living conditions.

All these measures as such do not pursue socialist aims, but, as pointed out in the Programme of the C.P.S.U., they go beyond the bounds of usual reforms and are of vital importance both for the working class in its struggle for the victory of the revolution, for socialism, and for the majority of the nation. These measures objectively promote the advance to socialism because they undermine the domination of the capitalist monopolies, Enemy No. 1 of the working class and of the entire people.

It is on the common platform of struggle against reactionary imperialism that the socialist and democratic forces unite. Socialism and democracy are indivisible. Only socialism brings unrestricted democracy and that is why the proletariat, while fighting for socialism, is at the same time a fervent champion of democracy. The working class and its Marxist party march in the van of the democratic movements of our age. Together with other sections of the people, the working class is combating the efforts of the financial oligarchy to abolish democratic freedoms, restrict the power of parliament and change the constitution in order to introduce the personal rule of representatives of the monopolies and to substitute a type of fascist dictatorship for the parliamentary system.

The proletariat, in the struggle for its rights, for democracy and socialism, employs the most diverse methods:

strikes, demonstrations, meetings, conferences and so on. It also makes use of parliamentary struggle.

The traditional form of struggle, the strike, is the most widely used method in present-day conditions. The fact that the strike movement in the capitalist countries is growing in size and strength blows to smithereens the assertions of bourgeois and reformist scribblers about the harmony of the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. While in 1958, according to incomplete figures, 22.4 million people went on strike in the capitalist world, in 1959 the number rose to 40.7 million and in 1960 to 53.2 million. At present strikes are of a more organised and mass nature than before the war. For example, in each of the three general strikes in Japan (June 1960) from 5 to 6.2 million people took part; in France 12 million people participated in each of the general strikes in February 1960 and April 1961.

The demands of the workers, it should be noted, go beyond purely economic bounds and acquire a political character. While in 1958 about 10 million people, or approximately 43 per cent of all strikers, took part in political strikes in the capitalist world, in 1960 the number rose to more than 41 million or about 73 per cent of the total. Demands for peace, abandoning the arms race and banning nuclear weapons are the keynote in working-class actions. The working class and its revolutionary vanguard, the Marxist parties, direct their *main blow at the capitalist monopolies*, the bulwark of reaction and aggression, which bear direct responsibility for the arms race and the hard lot of the working people.

The working class is joined in the struggle against the reactionary imperialist forces by millions of peasants and advanced sections of the intelligentsia and other progressive forces.

A distinctive feature of the working-class movement today is its exceptionally wide scope and greater political activity of the working people in the struggle against imperialist reaction, for peace, democracy and socialism.

The growth of the Communist and Workers' parties vividly reveals the deep changes in the political consciousness of the working people. On the eve of the Second World War, Communist parties in capitalist countries had 650,000-

700,000 members, while today they unite in their ranks more than 5,200,000 people.

The reactionary imperialist circles employ the most brutal measures against the communist and democratic movement. They increasingly resort to methods of open dictatorship by the monopoly bourgeoisie, abolish the remaining elements of democracy and use an old means to suppress the people, a "strong-hand" government. Ominous symptoms of fascism are appearing in some capitalist countries, and in West Germany in particular.

In these conditions the *unity of the working class and all the progressive and peace-loving forces* in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism acquires tremendous importance. The carrying out of the great historic tasks, it is pointed out in the Declaration of the Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Socialist Countries (1957) "necessitates closer unity not only of the Communist and Workers' parties, but of the entire working class, necessitates cementing the alliance of the working people and progressive mankind, the freedom- and peace-loving forces of the world".

Imperialist reaction and its henchmen in the labour movement, the anti-Communist, Social-Democratic leaders (Guy Mollet, Paul-Henri Spaak and others) and also all shades of opportunists, impede working-class unity, pursue a splitting policy, distort the essence of Marxist-Leninist theory and try to discredit the communist movement. In view of this, it has become highly important at the present stage to fight opportunist tendencies in the working-class and communist movement and to resolutely overcome revisionism and dogmatism.

The Communist parties have ideologically defeated revisionism in their ranks and this has further strengthened ideologically and organisationally each Communist party and the international communist movement as a whole. But the development of the communist and working-class movement today still demands struggle against revisionism, which remains the main danger, and also against dogmatism and sectarianism.

Revisionism, or Right-wing opportunism, distorts Marxism and emasculates its revolutionary spirit; it is a reflec-

tion of bourgeois influence on the working class. It paralyses the revolutionary will of the proletariat, of all working people and disarms them in the struggle against imperialist oppression, for peace, democracy and socialism.

Dogmatism and sectarianism stand in direct opposition to the creative development of Marxism-Leninism. Instead of studying the concrete situation their adherents trot out the same old formulas and dogmatic postulates, thus divorcing and isolating Communists from the people.

Consistent defence of the unity of the international communist movement and prevention of any action which could undermine this unity are necessary conditions for victory in the struggle for national independence, democracy and peace, for the successful accomplishment of the tasks of the socialist revolution, socialist and communist construction.

## 4. Classes and the Class Struggle in the Transition Period from Capitalism to Socialism

We know that there has been an implacable struggle between the exploited and the exploiters ever since the birth of private ownership of the means of production and antagonistic classes. This struggle ultimately leads to the socialist revolution, as a result of which the rule of the bourgeoisie is replaced by the government of the working people, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This ushers in the transition period from capitalism to socialism.

### *The Class Struggle During the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism*

The class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism is inevitable. The overthrown bourgeoisie will not reconcile itself to its loss of power to the working men it has exploited for decades, the bourgeoisie will not forgive these people for having encroached on its holy of holies, private property. The bourgeoisie will not resign itself to believe that an end has come to its idle,

carefree life which seemed eternal and inviolable, to its wealth, privileges and unlimited rule. That is why it resists the new, proletarian power so frenziedly and with such fanatical obstinacy.

The bourgeoisie employs all manner of means in the struggle against the proletariat. Making use of its economic positions, former ties with the top intellectuals, civil servants and army leaders, it tries to disrupt the country's economy, the functioning of state institutions and the defence. It also strives to influence the minds of the people. Lastly, in order to restore capitalism, it launches an overt armed struggle against the working people, placing its main hopes on the help of international capital. History shows that the victorious proletariat is compelled to wage a bitter struggle not only against the capitalists of its own country but also against the reactionary international bourgeoisie. There were the campaign of fourteen imperialist powers against the young Soviet Republic, the intervention of the imperialists in China and Korea, the events in Hungary in October 1956, etc.

In other words, the dictatorship of the proletariat does not eliminate the class struggle which continues in the transition period as well. But this struggle is now waged in conditions when the proletariat has political power and controls key positions in the economy. The forms of the class struggle change correspondingly. "The dictatorship of the proletariat," Lenin wrote, "is not the end of the class struggle, but its continuation in new forms. The dictatorship of the proletariat is class struggle waged by a proletariat which has been victorious and has taken political power in its hands against a bourgeoisie that has been defeated but not destroyed, a bourgeoisie that has not vanished, not ceased to offer resistance but that has intensified its resistance."*

The new forms of the class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism are: crushing the resistance of the exploiters—and this does not exclude the use of force, struggle for emancipating the peasant from the

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* Lenin, *Alliance of the Working Class and Peasantry*, 1959, p. 302.

influence of the bourgeoisie and drawing him into socialist construction, enrolment of bourgeois specialists to work in the national economy, educating the people in the spirit of socialist discipline.*

### *The Attitude of the Proletariat to the Use of Force*

The implacable struggle of the working class and the peasants against the defeated but resisting bourgeoisie is a major factor in social development in the transition period from capitalism to socialism. This struggle ultimately leads to the complete abolition of the bourgeoisie as a class and to the establishment of a society without exploitation of man by man.

What means are used by the working class to overcome the resistance of the bourgeoisie and what is its attitude to the use of force?

The ideologists of the bourgeoisie picture the dictatorship of the proletariat as a reign of unrestricted terror and destruction, claiming that the proletariat uses force, armed struggle, as the sole means of fighting the bourgeoisie. In reality, however, Marxism-Leninism, both in theory and in practice, is based on the principle that the resistance of the bourgeoisie can be overcome by using different methods, both forcible and peaceful.

The working class is the most humane class of our age. It strives to preserve and augment the treasures of human culture, to raise the level of production and to protect the principal productive force—man, the working people. That is why the proletariat is vitally interested in the *peaceful* transition from capitalism to socialism. The peaceful way safeguards huge material treasures, saves many human lives and therefore, as Lenin wrote, is the most painless, easiest and most advantageous path for the people to follow.

What road the revolution takes, peaceful or non-peaceful, depends not so much on the working class as on the extent of the bourgeoisie's resistance and its readiness to make concessions. "If the deposed class puts up no resistance to

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* This point is discussed in greater detail in Chapter XVII.

the new that is born in the course of the historical development of society, as the result of revolution," Khrushchov points out, "the working class has no need to use forcible means of suppression. But if the exploiters try to turn back the wheel of history, to prevent the people from taking power, if they try to strangle the revolution, then the working class, the working people in general, must in the name of their vital interests use means of suppression to maintain their social gains and to defend the vital interests of the working masses, of the entire people."*

In the Soviet Union, the first country of the socialist revolution, the bourgeoisie tried to regain its lost power, property and privileges by force and resorted to the armed collaboration of international capital. In these conditions the working class had no other alternative than to crush the bourgeoisie by force. The suppression of the bourgeoisie by force of arms, the civil war, was a specific form of the class struggle in the Soviet Republic during the transition period. Forcible means of suppression were also employed in the struggle against the kulaks, the rich peasants.

The experience of the European People's Democracies, however, has shown that forcible suppression of the bourgeoisie is not always a necessary form of the class struggle in the transition period. In these countries there was no civil war because real power was on the side of the proletariat. The main positions of the reactionary forces in these countries were already destroyed in the course of the liberation struggle against German fascism, while the remaining part of the bourgeoisie, not possessing sufficient strength, did not risk offer armed resistance to the people's government. At the same time the presence of the Soviet Army, which liberated these countries from the Nazis, prevented world imperialist reaction from organising military intervention against these countries.

The acuteness of the class struggle in the transition period differs not only from country to country, but also in one and the same country at different periods of its development. The experience of the Soviet Union and the

* *Let Us Live in Peace and Friendship*, pp. 234-35.

People's Democracies has shown that as the dictatorship of the proletariat is consolidated and socialist construction makes headway, the correlation of the class forces steadily changes in favour of socialism, with the result that the resistance offered by the remnants of the hostile classes grows weaker. This is the general tendency in the class struggle's development within a country in the transition period from capitalism to socialism.

The idea, put forward by Stalin in 1937, that the class struggle grows sharper as the forces of socialism gain in strength, was erroneous. This idea was formulated at the time when the exploiting classes had been abolished and socialism had been built in the U.S.S.R., and it was used to justify the most flagrant violations of the Leninist standards of party and state life, socialist democracy and legality.

Acting on the principle that the class struggle can acquire diverse forms in the transition period, the proletariat and its Marxist party set themselves the aim of mastering all forms of class struggle and applying those which best correspond to the concrete situation, to the objective correlation of the class forces.

### 5. The Class Composition of Socialist Society

With the building of socialism in the Soviet Union, the class composition of Soviet society radically changed. Private ownership of the means of production and the exploitation of man by man were abolished for ever. The exploiting classes were eliminated both in town and country. There remained two friendly classes, *the working class and the collective-farm peasantry*, plus the working *intelligentsia* which basically changed in Soviet times.

The working class was no longer the proletariat which had been exploited and deprived of all rights under capitalism. Together with all the other people, it owns the means of production and is the true master of the country. The working class remains the most organised and socially conscious class and by nature promotes friendly co-operation and mutual assistance. It therefore plays a leading

role in society both under socialism and in the period of full-scale communist construction.

The collectivisation of agriculture and the cultural revolution changed the position of the Soviet peasants beyond recognition. From a disunited, downtrodden class, exploited by the landlords and kulaks, the peasants became a genuinely free class working in large-scale mechanised agriculture.

Collective labour destroyed the age-old isolation of the peasant, helped him overcome his psychology as a private owner and fostered in him collectivism, friendship and co-operation. The extensive use of modern machinery necessitated the training of large contingents of farm machine operators whose labour differs little from the labour of the workers. In addition and as a consequence culture has spread in the countryside.

The intelligentsia too has changed greatly. The Soviet intelligentsia, the majority of whom come from the ranks of the working class and the peasants, is inseparable from the people and serves them loyally and selflessly.

The ranks of the intelligentsia have grown substantially in Soviet times. The number of people with a higher, incomplete higher and special secondary education rose from 290,000 in 1913 to 13,400,000 in 1959. Two million teachers, hundreds of thousands of doctors, engineers and technicians, lawyers, financial and other experts now work for the good of Soviet society.

Class relations of domination and subordination have been abolished for ever in the Soviet Union; there are no privileged classes or groups here and all members of society have an equal relation to the means of production; therefore exploitation, the appropriation of someone else's labour is impossible. Socialist society is a society of the working people. "We," Khrushchov said, "have no capitalists. Our factories and mills belong to the people. So does all the land with its riches. Peasants work on that land as members of collective farms. Each has an income that depends on the amount of work he puts in, not on capital invested."

Since there are no exploiters and exploited but only working classes and social groups in socialist society, there is no class struggle.

*The social, political and ideological unity of the Soviet people* has been formed in socialist society. This unity has its source in the community of the basic economic and political aims of the working class, the peasants and the intelligentsia, in their unanimous striving to build communist society which will bring them the greatest material and cultural benefits. This community of interests enables the Soviet people to act together, harmoniously, in order to overcome by concerted effort the hardest trials and to accomplish tasks of great historic importance. The strength of millions of people, bound by their community of interests, welded together by unity of action and inspired by the mighty ideas of communism, constitutes a great, indestructible force.

### 6. Ways of Eliminating Class Distinctions

Socialist society has two friendly classes, the working class and the peasants. This is because under socialism two forms of socialist property—state and co-operative collective-farm property—are preserved, as a result of which essential distinctions between town and country remain. Under socialism there is also the intelligentsia, a social group which owes its existence to the essential distinctions between manual and mental labour.

That is why the process of eliminating both class differences and the distinctions between the intelligentsia, on the one hand, and the workers and the peasants, on the other, actually entails the abolition of the distinctions between town and country, between mental and manual labour. In order to fully abolish classes, Lenin held, it is not only necessary to abolish the exploiting classes, but also "to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual and brain workers."*

Social distinctions in Soviet society are gradually removed on the basis of the steady development of the productive forces and the socialist production relations and their change into communist relations.

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, 1951, p. 225.

*Ways of Eliminating the Essential Distinctions Between Town and Country*

Under capitalism, the town ruthlessly exploits the countryside, and there is consequently an irreconcilable antithesis of interests. Socialism removes the antithesis between town and country, but essential distinctions between them remain in regard to the economy, culture and way of life. In the first place, in town, in industry, property belongs to the state, to the entire people, while in the countryside, in collective-farm production, group, co-operative collective-farm property prevails. In addition to this, not only does the countryside lag somewhat behind the town in the cultural level but its way of life differs.

In the course of building communism, as collective-farm property is further consolidated and developed, it gradually draws closer to state property. This process takes place as the technical facilities of the collective farm grow, causing agricultural labour gradually to become a variety of industrial labour. A major step in this direction was taken by the reorganisation of the machine and tractor stations and the sale of machinery to the collective farms.

Greater mechanisation steadily raises labour productivity and agricultural efficiency, which brings about a further growth in the incomes of the collective farms and the collective farmers. The amounts and the forms of labour remuneration received by the collective farmers will increasingly draw closer to the amounts and forms of labour remuneration of urban workers at factories.

The change in the nature of agricultural production alters the face of the countryside, improving the way of life of the peasants and raising their cultural level.

Large-scale construction is under way in the countryside. Collective farms are erecting garages, machine-repair shops, warehouses, livestock buildings, enterprises for processing agricultural raw materials and foodstuffs and for manufacturing building materials, canteens, kindergartens, and nurseries, bakeries, shops and various service establishments. A large number of houses are being built, especially the urban-type homes with central heating and other ameni-

ties. The collective-farm villages will gradually become well-developed urban-like estates.

The collective farms are investing large funds for the construction of cultural centres, clubs, libraries, schools, stadiums, playgrounds, etc. The book and the radio, telephone and TV are becoming permanent features of collective-farm life. Rural universities of culture, people's theatres, music schools, and amateur arts are increasingly spreading in rural areas.

Town and country will draw together also through the change in vocational composition of the population. A large number of engineers, technicians, agronomists, livestock experts and farm machine operators have become regular residents in the countryside. More and more teachers, doctors and other specialists serve rural areas.

As the Soviet Union draws nearer to communism living conditions of the urban population will greatly improve. There will be no more overcrowding of residential districts and people will have more air, light and greenery. In this respect their working and living conditions will draw nearer to those in the countryside.

That is how the essential distinctions between town and country will be removed. Once this is achieved the division of society into the working class and the peasants will disappear for ever.

### *Ways of Eliminating the Essential Distinctions Between Manual and Brain Workers*

The vast majority of intellectuals have served the exploiting classes for centuries and helped to oppress the working people, the manual workers. This is the reason for the age-old antithesis between manual and mental labour. Socialism has abolished this antithesis as well. Soviet intellectuals, hand in hand with the manual workers, the workers and the peasants, are working for the good of their socialist country. Under socialism, however, essential distinctions between manual and brain workers still remain: the cultural and technical level of the workers and peasants still lags behind the cultural level and the technical knowledge of the intelligentsia. To remove this distinction it

is necessary to raise the culture and technical education of the workers and peasants to the level of the intelligentsia. This task is being accomplished in the period of full-scale communist construction.

The main means of solving this problem is technical progress and the attendant change in the nature of labour itself. Technological progress, the introduction of new complex and highly efficient machines, automation and complete electrification of production, the use of atomic energy and the wide application of the achievements of chemistry and other sciences demand not only special technical skills from the workers, but also an advanced general education and knowledge of the fundamentals of science. Technical progress is indissolubly bound up with the general cultural and technical advance of the workers and peasants. It is in the process of *labour*, the main sphere of human activity, that the member of communist society, the man of all-round development, will be primarily moulded.

The movement of communist labour contributes to eliminating the essential distinctions between manual and mental labour. The main aim of those who take part in this movement is to raise labour productivity on the basis of technical progress, and to achieve their aim through constant and persistent study, increase in skill and general education.

The reorganisation of education now under way is also helping to eliminate the essential distinctions between mental and manual labour. The purpose of this reorganisation is to bring education closer to productive labour, which will considerably improve the upbringing of the younger generation and make for better training of specialists in all spheres. To enable more and more workers and peasants to augment their skill and to raise their cultural level, the Soviet Union is extending the network of various technical courses, agronomical and zootechnical courses, general schools, correspondence courses and evening institutes offering a higher or special secondary education.

The Communist Party and the Soviet Government have taken care to give the people the free time necessary for gaining more knowledge and raising their cultural level,

Measures for reducing the working day are being carried out. Within a few years factory and office workers will work a six- or seven-hour day and have two free days a week. The Soviet people will have the shortest and highest paid working day in the world.

When communism is built there will no longer be any essential distinctions between mental and manual labour. Both the narrow, specialised mental labour and the purely manual labour will disappear in communist society. A qualitatively new type of labour will arise in which the physical and mental efforts of the members of communist society, people of all-round development, will be harmoniously blended.

*CHAPTER XVI*

# NATIONS AND THE NATIONAL-LIBERATION MOVEMENT

The struggle of classes, as we have seen, is a primary factor in the development of an antagonistic class society. In our age, alongside the struggle of classes, the national-liberation movement has acquired great importance in the development of mankind. We shall now examine the Marxist-Leninist theory of nations and the national-liberation movement. Let us first of all ascertain what are nations and how they originated.

## 1. What Is a Nation?

Besides classes, contemporary society has national communities of people, nations. Nations arose much later than classes. Whereas classes were formed in the course of the emergence of slave society, nations are a product of the development of capitalism.

Nations were preceded in history by such communities of people as the clan, tribe and nationality.

The *clan* is a group of people connected by consanguineous and economic ties. Collective ownership and use of the means of production served as the basis of the clan. Several clans united in a *tribe*. The tribe and the clan existed in primitive-communal society.

A new type of community of people, *nationality*, existed in the slave and feudal societies. The nationality, in contrast to the clan, was based not on consanguineous ties

but on common territory, language and culture. A nationality was not a sufficiently stable community of people, since slavery and feudalism could not produce an economic community embracing entire countries; without this condition no close, stable relations between people are possible. It is true that markets and the exchange of commodities existed in slave society and under feudalism, but they were of limited, local significance and incapable of eliminating economic and political disunity.

With the development of capitalism economic disunity was gradually eliminated and a single market emerged, as a result of which nationalities turned into nations. "Nations," Lenin wrote, "are an inevitable product, and an inevitable form of the bourgeois epoch of social development."*

Like a nationality, a nation possesses such features as a common territory, language and culture. But, in contrast to a nationality, a nation is a stable community of people. Lenin pointed out that "profoundest economic factors" ** gave it stability. Slavonic tribes in Kiev Rus, although they constituted one nationality with a single language and a common territory, were not yet a nation. National ties between them only arose in the new period of Russian history (approximately in the 17th century) when the economic disunity of the country was ended, commodity circulation developed and the small local markets merged into one all-Russian market. *Community of economic life* is therefore a major feature of a nation. It is the economy, economic ties, that bind people living on one territory and possessing a common language, into a single whole, a nation. In the course of economic and political development a common psychology is formed which is manifested in the historical traditions of a nation and in the specific features of its culture and way of life.

Nations should not be confused with *races*. Racial distinctions are physical features of people according to certain biological characteristics: colour, shape of eyes, etc. Depending on these features there are three basic races: white, yellow and black.

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* Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, 1951, p. 47.
** Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Part 2, 1952, p. 319.

Some ideologists of the bourgeoisie have sought to explain the economic, political and cultural level of a people, a man's position in society by racial distinctions. They prate about the superiority of the white race which is allegedly predestined to dominate over the coloured races. But history and scientific facts show that people of all races possess equal abilities. If some peoples not belonging to the white race are backward, it is not due to the colour of their skin or hair, but to centuries of colonial oppression by the white exploiters. At present, the people in former colonies and dependent countries, who have thrown off the yoke of colonialism, are successfully developing their economy and culture. In the countries which have taken the socialist road—China, North Korea and North Viet-Nam—the people are progressing very rapidly.

## 2. Marxism-Leninism on the National-Colonial Question

Nations formed under capitalism are *bourgeois nations.* Although the working class and the other sections of the working people make up the overwhelming majority of the population of these nations, the bourgeoisie plays the dominant role owning all the means of production, controlling state power and the mass media. That is why the face of a bourgeois nation is mainly determined by the capitalist economy, politics and ideology. Oppression and domination of the weaker nations by the nations which are stronger economically and militarily, is a law governing the development of bourgeois nations. It is therefore understandable that the development of nations under capitalism is inseparably bound up with the keen struggle of the oppressed for their liberation. The *national question*, i.e., the question of how the oppressed nations can achieve liberation, abolish national oppression and establish equal relations between peoples, becomes especially acute under capitalism and is one of the primary problems of social development.

Marxism-Leninism underlines the importance of the national question and demands that the approach to it be guided

by the concrete historical conditions. To solve it properly account must be taken of society's development in different epochs, the specific features in each country's development, the alignment of the class forces both in the world and within the given state, the activity of the working people of different nations, the level of their social consciousness, organisation, etc.

The content of the national question has not remained the same at different stages in the development of capitalism. When capitalist society was on the upgrade this question did not as a rule go beyond the bounds of *individual* countries. Multi-national states, like Russia, Austro-Hungary and others which contained both oppressing and oppressed nations, were the main arena of national oppression and the national-liberation struggle. The national question was in effect reduced to the problem of national minorities, their struggle for liberation, for the right to develop their own economy and culture.

With the advent of imperialism national relations changed. The world was divided into a handful of dominating nations, the most developed imperialist countries, and a majority of colonial and dependent nations and countries. Lenin regarded the division of nations into oppressing and oppressed as "basic, most essential and inevitable under imperialism".* The colonial system of imperialism was formed. Capitalism, which in its initial stage facilitated the emancipation of the peoples from the feudal yoke and from the grip of the church, on entering the imperialist stage, became the biggest oppressor of nations, the ruthless suppressor of the people's freedom. The content of the national question changed and its bounds were greatly extended. From an intra-state question it turned into an *international* problem affecting the destinies of millions upon millions of people the world over.

Under imperialism the national question is no longer one of national minorities within the bounds of one state, but a *national-colonial question*. It is above all a question of struggle by the peoples against colonial oppression, a question of their liberation and progress.

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, 4th Russ. ed., p. 136.

Although Marx, Engels and Lenin judged the national question to be important they did not consider it the basic question of the revolutionary movement. They always subordinated this question to the crux of Marxism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, they always put it in the context of the international working-class movement, the struggle for peace, socialism and social progress. They adhered to the principle that the national problem as a whole is basically insoluble within the bounds of capitalist society. It can only be solved when the proletariat is in power, i.e., in socialist society.

Lenin revealed two contradictory tendencies in the development of national relations under capitalism. On the one hand, national consciousness awakens and national movements arise, a struggle takes place against any national oppression and national states are formed. On the other hand, relations develop between different nations, national partitions fall and a single economy, a world market, takes shape. The first tendency prevails in the period when capitalism is on the upgrade, the second, in the era of imperialism when socialism inevitably comes to succeed capitalism.

Both these tendencies stem from the requirements of society's development and are historically progressive. Under capitalism, however, they take on distorted forms which are incompatible with their objectively progressive content. Imperialism creates gigantic international banks and trusts, an all-embracing world economy, increasingly uniting and internationalising society's economic, political and cultural life. But this unification, this "drawing together" of nations under the domination of the capitalist monopolies can only come about through violence, colonial plunder and oppression of one nation by another, which is stronger and more developed. Under imperialism entire nations, big and small, huge continents have become victims of colonial expansion by a handful of imperialist pirates who have relentlessly crushed any attempt of the oppressed peoples to liberate themselves. The tendency to unite, to draw nations together comes into irreconcilable conflict with the tendency towards national independence and the formation of national states.

These tendencies in the development of national relations are reflected in bourgeois ideology and politics and they assume the form of nationalism. Marxism-Leninism is an irreconcilable foe of any manifestation of bourgeois nationalism, but at the same time it makes a differentiation between nationalism of the dominating nations (great-power chauvinism and racialism) and nationalism of the oppressed nations. Great-power chauvinism and racialism, which attempt to justify the domination of one nation over another, are an utterly reactionary ideology and are fully rejected by the working class. On the other hand, nationalism of the oppressed nations contains a tendency of struggle for independence and against imperialism. This is progressive and therefore is supported by the proletariat. "The bourgeois nationalism of *every* oppressed nation," Lenin wrote, "has a general democratic content which is directed *against* oppression, and it is this content that we support *unconditionally*."* The nationalism of a number of Asian and African countries today is an example. What gives this nationalism a progressive content is the struggle against imperialism and colonialism, feudal reaction and backwardness, in the course of which the political consciousness of the people, above all the millions of peasants, awakens.

Owing to the transitory nature of the historically progressive role of the national bourgeoisie in the national-liberation movement, the progressive tendency in the nationalism of the oppressed nations is not permanent. That is why the Marxist party, while supporting the struggle of the oppressed peoples for liberation, tries to free the working people from the influence of all bourgeois nationalism, because it is incompatible with proletarian internationalism, the ideology proclaiming the solidarity of the working people of the world. The Marxist party fights the ideology of bourgeois nationalism by demonstrating the decisive role of the class struggle in any social movement and calling for the unity of the proletariat of all countries. In this way it instils the ideas of proletarian internationalism in the minds of the working people.

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Part 2, 1952, p. 337.

## 3. The Advance of the Peoples' Movement for National Liberation and the Break-up of Imperialism's Colonial System

### *The Break-up of Colonialism — a Distinctive Feature of Our Age*

The brutal, inhuman exploitation of the colonies and dependent countries by the imperialists brought into being the liberation struggle against colonial oppression, for freedom and national independence.

The Great October Socialist Revolution gave a mighty impulse to the national-liberation movement; it awakened the East and drew the colonial peoples into the common stream of the world revolutionary movement. The Soviet Union has been an inexhaustible source of political and moral support for the oppressed.

The new correlation of forces in the world after the Second World War, the triumph of the socialist revolution in a number of European and Asian countries and the formation of the world socialist system created particularly favourable conditions for the national-liberation struggle. Whereas imperialism took away the national independence and freedom of the majority of the peoples and put the fetters of brutal colonial slavery on them, the *rise of socialism*, as the Programme of the C.P.S.U. points out, *marks the advent of the era of emancipation of the oppressed peoples.* A powerful wave of national-liberation revolutions is sweeping away the colonial system and undermining the foundations of imperialism. Young sovereign states have arisen, and are arising, in former colonies and semi-colonies.

The face of Asia has radically changed and in Africa the colonial system is crumbling. In fifteen post-war years, about 40 Asian and African states have won their national independence. Latin America, over which the U.S. imperialists have ruled undividedly for decades, is rising up to fight imperialism and colonialism. Heroic Cuba, in which the people's revolution has won, has become the banner for the peoples of the Latin American continent in their just struggle for national freedom and social progress. The time is not far distant when colonialism, this disgraceful blight

on human history, will be abolished for all time. "*The complete collapse of colonialism is imminent. The breakdown of the system of colonial slavery under the impact of the national-liberation movement is a development ranking second in historical importance only to the formation of the world socialist system.*" *

What makes the breakdown of the colonial system important is that it draws hundreds of millions of people into the making of history. The peoples of the young sovereign states which have arisen on the ruins of colonial empires, have come to the fore as builders of a new life and active participants in world affairs, as a revolutionary force destroying imperialism. The collapse of the colonial system signifies the advent of a new period in mankind's development.

The peoples who have thrown off the yoke of colonialism are destined to play an outstanding part in solving the overriding issue of our age, that is, to prevent another world war, to maintain and strengthen peace. These peoples, together with the peoples of the socialist countries, comprise two-thirds of the world's population, and this is a titanic force capable of compelling the imperialist aggressors to retreat.

### *The Social Essence and Tasks of the National-Liberation Movement*

The working class and its Marxist party are the most irreconcilable foes of colonialism and ardent champions of national equality and political independence. They are out to accomplish the tasks of the national, anti-imperialist, democratic revolution to the end and fight the efforts of the reactionary forces retarding social progress. The national-liberation movement is neither proletarian, nor socialist in character. Nor does it aim to abolish capitalism and establish a new socialist society. At the same time it is capable of solving, and does solve, important social problems, such as the abolition of the feudal order and its survivals, eradication of the aftermath of colonialism and of imperialist rule, restriction and ousting of the foreign

* Statement of the Meeting of Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties, 1960, p. 35.

monopolies, development of a national industry, radical land reforms, consolidation of political independence, pursuance of an independent peace policy in foreign affairs and reconstruction of social life along broad democratic lines.

Solution of these general democratic, national problems is furiously resisted by the imperialist forces who seek to keep the former colonies and semi-colonies in the capitalist economic system and to drag them into the orbit of their reactionary, aggressive policy. *Consistent struggle against imperialism*, above all against U.S. imperialism, the main bulwark of colonialism, is therefore a *basic requisite for the success of the national-liberation revolution.*

All the progressive forces of a nation can unite, and do unite, to carry out the national democratic tasks in the colonies. Alongside the working class in this struggle are wide sections of the peasants, other middle groups and also that section of the national bourgeoisie which is objectively interested in achieving the main tasks of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, namely, to create a local economy and market and protect them from the encroachments of the foreign imperialists. A bloc of all these progressive, patriotic forces of a nation fighting for complete national independence, for broad democracy and consummation of the national-liberation revolution, can serve as a political basis for a *national democracy*. The formation and development of a national democracy opens up broad prospects before the peoples in the economically less-developed countries.

The participation of the national bourgeoisie in the national-liberation movement does not change the progressive nature of the struggle. The working class of an oppressed nation, however, acting jointly with the bourgeoisie and other social forces, must take into account the inconsistency of the bourgeoisie, its instability and inclination to compromise with imperialism and feudalism.

*The alliance between the working class and the peasants is the most important force of the national-liberation movement.* Without this alliance it is impossible to achieve and defend national independence, profound democratic reforms and social progress.

Fighting for the freedom and independence of the peoples in the colonies, the working class and its Marxist party do not consider national independence the ultimate goal of their struggle. History shows that after they win political independence, the people are faced with a number of important problems, the biggest of which is what road to follow, the road of capitalist or non-capitalist development.

Different classes and parties propose different solutions to this problem. The bourgeoisie seeks to steer national development into the capitalist channel, to preserve private property and exploitation. It does everything in its power to play down class contradictions within a nation which become increasingly acute after the winning of independence. As these contradictions become aggravated, the bourgeoisie is more and more likely to compromise with internal reactionaries and external imperialist forces.

The situation is different in regard to the working people. They learn from their own experience that the capitalist road holds out nothing good for them, that capitalism is the road to the people's suffering. The people are beginning to realise that *socialism is the only road to freedom and happiness*. Only socialism can eliminate the age-old backwardness of the former colonies and dependent countries, ensure their rapid economic and cultural advance, satisfy the material and spiritual needs of the people and save them for ever from exploitation, poverty and starvation, from the threat of another world war.

The road to choose is the affair of each nation. With the present correlation of forces in the world, when the peoples liberated from colonialism have the opportunity of getting great support from the world socialist system, they can decide in their own interests, i.e., choose the non-capitalist road. The active struggle of the working class, the masses, all the national democratic, anti-imperialist forces enable a country to follow this road, thus meeting the interests of the overwhelming majority of the nation. Prerequisites for socialist changes are thus created in the course of the struggle for national liberation.

## 4. Socialism and Nations

### *Solution of the National Question in the Soviet Union*

Capitalist society, which is based on private property and exploitation and fans the flames of discord and enmity between nations, is incapable of solving the national question. Only socialism, by abolishing exploitation and class antagonism, puts an end to national discord and ensures genuine progress, mutual confidence and the drawing together of nations. "In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to," Marx and Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*, "the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end."

Lenin drew up a concrete programme for solving the national question, a programme which calls for the nations' progress and their drawing together. The basic principles of this programme are: complete democratic reconstruction of society's life along socialist lines, establishment of genuine equality of all races and nations, granting nations the right to self-determination up to secession and formation of independent states and international solidarity of the working class of all nationalities in the country. This national programme, based on respect for all nations, big and small, and concern for their vital needs and aspirations, helped to weld together the workers and peasants of Russia's numerous nationalities into an unbreakable union headed by the working class, the union which was one of the primary factors ensuring the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The socialist revolution in Russia smashed the chains of national oppression, abolished the old enmity between the peoples and cleared the way for their all-round co-operation and drawing together. It gave them the right to decide their own fate, to develop their national statehood, economy and culture.

The Soviet Communist Party and the socialist state have paid the closest attention to the national problem since the

first Soviet days. As early as November 15, 1917, the Soviet Government adopted the "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia" which proclaimed the equality and sovereignty of all peoples in the country, their unrestricted right to self-determination up to secession and formation of independent states, abolition of all national privileges and restrictions and free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups.

This Declaration put an end to national oppression and introduced political and legal equality for the numerous nations and nationalities in the country. At the same time a solid foundation was laid for the voluntary unification of all the nations and nationalities into one state. This unification was consummated in the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (December 30, 1922). It was the first multi-national state in the world founded on national equality and voluntary union. The formation of the U.S.S.R. strengthened the economic and military might of the Soviet republics, reinforced their political position and created the necessary prerequisites for the further drawing together of the peoples, for their joint building of socialism.

Liberation of the nations naturally could not be limited only to abolishing national oppression and creating equality in political and legal rights. The main thing was to eliminate the age-old economic and cultural backwardness inherited by the new society from autocratic Russia. The Soviet socialist state successfully coped with this difficult task as well. It not only gave the formerly oppressed peoples the right to free development but also helped them to overcome their backwardness and to raise their national economy and culture to great heights.

After restoring the economy which had been wrecked by the First World War and the Civil War, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government at once undertook to industrialise the country, especially the non-Russian republics. Thanks to the constant concern of the Party and the state, the unselfish assistance of the other nations, the Russian people above all, new industries—metallurgical, automobile, electrical equipment and others—were built up in the formerly backward republics and their economy grew

at exceptionally high rates. It is indicative that these rates were much higher than the rates for the Soviet Union as a whole. In Soviet times about 1,000 industrial enterprises have been set up, for example, in Georgia and some 500 factories, mines and electric power stations in Armenia.

Agriculture in the Union republics has changed to collective and highly mechanised farming. And the people too have changed. Now there are many skilled workers and intellectuals in the Soviet republics. *The peoples of the Soviet Union brought about a revolution not only in their economic life, but also in their culture.*

Literacy has become universal in all republics which now have a large number of schools, universities, research and cultural institutions, etc. A new culture, socialist in content and national in form, has been created. In cultural development the Soviet non-Russian republics have greatly outstripped not only capitalist countries in the East, but also the developed capitalist countries in the West.

As a result of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., the former national borderlands have been turned from economically and culturally backward, agrarian, raw-material appendages of tsarist Russia into advanced socialist states with a highly developed industry and agriculture, their own working class and a large body of intellectuals.

Bourgeois nations have been transformed into qualitatively new, *socialist nations*. Many nationalities have become socialist nations on a new socio-economic basis; quite a few of them have skipped the capitalist stage and, with the help of other, more developed peoples, have risen to the level of the advanced nations.

Nations in the Soviet Union have developed not by erecting higher national barriers and intensifying national segregation and selfishness, as happens under capitalism, but by drawing together, by their fraternal, mutual assistance and friendship. The vigorous and all-round development of each nation, on the one hand, and the ever greater drawing together of the socialist nations on the basis of the principles of proletarian internationalism, on the other—these are the two inter-connected *progressive tendencies*

in the national question operating under socialism. As a result, Khrushchov said at the 22nd Party Congress: "A new historical community of people of different nationalities possessing common characteristics—the Soviet people—has taken shape in the U.S.S.R. They have a common socialist motherland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a common economic basis, the socialist economy, a common social class structure, a common world outlook—Marxism-Leninism—a common goal, that of building communism, and many common features in their spiritual make-up, in their psychology."

The Marxist programme on the national question, drawn up by Lenin, has been fully carried out in the U.S.S.R. The undivided rule of socialist production relations in the Soviet Union has served as the basis for the establishment of unique relations between peoples, *relations of fraternal co-operation and mutual assistance*. Friendship between the Soviet peoples, resulting from the victory of socialism, has become a driving force of socialist society, an important source of its strength. The national question, one of the most involved and acute problems of mankind's development, has been completely solved in the Soviet Union. This is a striking triumph for Marxism-Leninism, the ideas of proletarian internationalism.

The experience of the Soviet Union in the sphere of national relations has conclusively shown that only the socialist revolution creates conditions for the complete abolition of national oppression, for the voluntary union of free and equal peoples in one state, for genuine progress and the drawing together of nations. This experience is now being utilised by states in the world socialist system for solving the national problem both within each country and among countries in the socialist commonwealth of nations as a whole. This valuable experience is also of great importance both for the peoples of young sovereign national states which have broken the colonial chains and for the peoples who are fighting for liberation from colonialism. For them the successes of the Soviet peoples are a source of inspiration and strength in their hard struggle against imperialism and colonialism. To them the present of the socialist nations is a model of their own future.

*The Further Drawing Together of Nations in the Course of Building Communism*

Full-scale communist construction signifies a new stage in the development of national relations in the Soviet Union and is marked by the further drawing together of the peoples and the achievement of their complete unity. The building of the material and technical basis of communism leads to an even closer unity of the Soviet peoples.

Construction of the material and technical basis of communism promotes the further all-round economic development of the Union republics, the constant improvement of the division of labour between them, the extension of existing economic relations and the establishment of new ones. The communist economy requires the closest interconnection between the Soviet republics. As the Soviet Union advances to communism, therefore, each republic will make a bigger contribution to the common task of developing the country's productive forces, and the socialist nations will draw economically closer together. This will be facilitated by the building of new industrial centres, the discovery and tapping of natural resources, the opening up of virgin lands and remote areas, and the development of all modes of transport. All this will extend contacts between nations, the exchange of production know-how and cultural achievements.

The drawing together of nations in the course of communist construction will mean that boundaries between the Union republics will lose their former significance. This is understandable, for all the nations of the Soviet land have equal rights, their life rests on one socialist basis, the material and spiritual needs of each people are satisfied in equal measure. All of them are bound by common, vital interests, are members of one family and are marching together, shoulder to shoulder, to one goal.

Each Soviet republic is becoming more multi-national in regard to the composition of its population. This also attests to the drawing together of the Soviet nations. Men and women of the most diverse nationalities live and work side by side in all republics. In socialist factories too men and women of many nationalities work side by side.

The successes of building communism, removal of class distinctions and development of communist social relations serve as the basis for increasing the social homogeneity of nations, for developing common communist features in their culture, morality and way of life. This further strengthens trust and friendship between them. The spiritual unity of nations grows still stronger. The socialist culture of the Soviet peoples fully blossoms forth and the national cultures are mutually enriched and drawn together. An international culture develops which assimilates mankind's finest cultural attainments and is common for all the nations. The treasure-house of culture of each nation is enriched by creations of an international character, which initiates the shaping of mankind's single communist culture.

*The drawing together of nations in the course of communist construction is an objective process.* But this does not mean that it occurs spontaneously, smoothly and without a hitch. The economic and cultural development of the socialist nations, their gradual drawing together involve implacable struggle against the manifestations and survivals of nationalism and chauvinism, against tendencies towards national isolation and exclusiveness, against embellishing the past and glossing over social contradictions in their history, against obsolete customs and habits.

With the victory of communism in the Soviet Union the nations will draw still closer together. Their economic and ideological community will increase, their culture will advance to unparalleled heights and the communist traits in their spiritual make-up will be developed to the full.

Nations will eventually merge, but the elimination of distinctions between them is a much slower process than the removal of distinctions between classes. With the victory of communism class distinctions will disappear, but national and especially language distinctions will remain for a long time.

In our age, when the world socialist system has arisen and is growing, the process of nations drawing together has exceeded national boundaries and has acquired international importance. Relations of fraternal unity and co-operation have been established between states of the socialist system, and the development of the socialist system shows

that these relations meet the supreme national interests of each country. Co-operation between the socialist states enables each one of them to successfully withstand the pressure of the imperialists, to make the most rational and fullest use of their own resources, to develop their economy and enrich national culture. With further successes in building socialism and communism, the exchange of material and spiritual wealth by the states of the socialist community is stepped up. Their might increases and their economic, political and ideological unity grows stronger. *The rise of the world socialist system is the most important step, after the formation of the Soviet Union, towards the all-round drawing together of nations.*

*CHAPTER XVII*

# THE STATE

There is no question which has been more confused by bourgeois sociologists than that of the state, Lenin pointed out, because no other question affects more the interests of the ruling classes. The ideologists of the bourgeoisie picture the state as some kind of supernatural force given to man by providence since time immemorial. It supposedly has no class character and is merely an innocuous "instrument of order", an "arbiter" called upon to resolve disputes which may arise between people regardless of their class affiliation. Such a "theory" of the state serves to justify the privileges of the bourgeoisie and the existence of exploitation and capitalism.

## 1. The Origin and Essence of the State

### *The State as a Product of Society's Historical Development*

In contrast to bourgeois ideologists, Marxism has demonstrated that the state is not something introduced into society from the outside, but is a product of society's internal development. The state was brought into being by changes in material production. The succession of one mode of production by another causes a change in the state system.

The state has not always existed. Primitive society which had no private property and no classes had no state either. Naturally there were certain social functions, but

they were performed by men chosen by all of society which had the right to dismiss these people at any time and to appoint others.

The further development of the productive forces, as we have already observed, led to the disintegration of primitive society. Private property appeared, accompanied by classes—slaves and slave-owners. It became necessary to protect private property, the rule and security of its owners, and this brought the state into being. The birth of the state and its further development were accompanied by a fierce class struggle.

The state is a product of *class* society. It arose with the appearance of classes and it will vanish, wither away with the disappearance of classes. But this will only happen in communist society.

### *The Essense of the State*

In an antagonistic class society the *state* is a political instrument, "a machine for maintaining the rule of one class over another".* The class dominating economically, i.e., possessing the means of production, acquires in the state a powerful instrument for the subjection of the oppressed and exploited. The state has a very obvious class character. Being a principal part of the superstructure founded on the economic basis of society, the state takes every measure to strengthen and protect this basis.

What are the features of a state?

The main feature of a state is the existence of *public* (social) power representing the interests not of the entire population, but of the class which dominates economically. This power rests on armed force—the army and the police.

In primitive society all the people were armed. But in a society divided into hostile classes, the armed forces are in the hands of the ruling class and are used to suppress the people, to subordinate them to a small clique of exploiters. Representative bodies (parliaments), the huge bureaucratic administrative machine with a whole army of officials, intelligence agencies, the courts and prisons—all

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* Lenin, *The State*, Moscow, 1954, p. 20.

are used for the same purpose. All of them combined make up the political power of the exploiting state.

As class contradictions deepen and the class struggle grows, the state machine expands. This process is particularly intensive in contemporary capitalist society where the state machine and the armed forces have grown to an unparalleled size. The maintenance of this colossal state machine and the armed forces is a heavy burden for the people, especially today when imperialist circles are engaged in the arms race.

While in primitive society people settled in consanguineous groups, in a state the population is grouped *territorially*, i.e., in districts, counties, states, regions, etc. Territorial settlement is a result of the development of production, the increasing division of labour and the growth of trade and commodity exchange.

## 2. The State in an Exploiting Society

### *Functions of Exploiting States*

The state of any exploiting society (slave, feudal, capitalist) is designed to protect the interests of the ruling class both within the country, in relations with other classes, and outside, in relations with other states. There are therefore two main trends or functions in the activities of a state: internal and external. The internal function is the main one and it determines all the foreign affairs of a state.

Let us examine these functions.

The *internal* function of an exploiting state is to keep control over the working people, to subordinate them to the small group of oppressors. This reflects the class nature of the state and is expressed in its internal policy, the struggle against the oppressed classes. Economic compulsion, which the exploiters can use owing to their monopoly over the means of production, is not enough to win this struggle. They need a special machine of coercion, the exploiting state.

The first exploiting state was the slave state. It was succeeded by the feudal state, which in turn was superseded

by the capitalist state. Although there were certain differences, all the three had one task in common: to keep the people in check and to crush any attempt of the working people to emancipate themselves from exploitation.

The slave-owners' state put down by force of arms the slaves who rose against their masters. The feudal state forcibly bound the peasants to the landlord's estate and cruelly punished those who refused to toil for the landlord. The numerous peasant uprisings ended in blood baths. The capitalist state, although it likes to parade in democratic garb, is also a machine for the subjection of the working people. Its real purpose is to protect private capitalist property, maintain wage-slavery and crush the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

The *external* function of the exploiting state is to capture foreign territories or defend its own land from attack. This reflects the relations of the state with other states and is expressed in its foreign policy. Foreign policy stems from home policy and is a continuation of the latter. The reactionary, predatory foreign policy of contemporary imperialism is a natural supplement to its home policy of suppressing the working class and all other progressive forces.

### *Types of States and Forms of Rule*

States differ according to the class they serve and the economic basis on which they arose. Four *types* of states are known in history: slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist. In contrast to the first three which defend the interests of the exploiters, the socialist state is a state of a *new type*, a genuine state of the *people*.

Each type of state has its intrinsic *form of government*, i.e., order, organisation of rule by the dominant class. The form of government depends on the concrete historical conditions in each country, the correlation of the class forces, and external conditions. However diverse the form of government, however much it may change, the type of state, its class nature, remains unaltered within the framework of the given economic system.

Slave society had different forms of government: a monarchy—the rule of one man, the emperor, the monarch;

a republic—elective rule; aristocracy—the rule of a relatively small minority; democracy—the rule of the majority. In spite of these differences, the state in the slave era was a state of the slave-owners.

Feudal society presented a similar picture. A monarchy was the most widespread form of government in the feudal state, but at times it also appeared in other forms, for example, a republic. Whatever the form, the feudal state served as an instrument for suppressing the serfs and the artisans.

Diversity of form is also true of the bourgeois state. Most frequently this state appears as a republic (the United States, France, Italy and other countries). Under capitalism the monarchic form seldom exists and the rule of the monarch is in one way or another restricted by the constitution or other legislative acts (Britain and Belgium). In the imperialist era the bourgeoisie also makes use of fascist dictatorship (Hitler Germany, Franco Spain, and so on). The unlimited power of the bourgeoisie is exercised in any form of the bourgeois state.

With society's development the types and forms of the state changed, but this did not affect their essence—exploitation. Only the forms changed, but exploitation itself was preserved.

### *Reactionary Nature of the Contemporary Bourgeois State*

The ideologists and politicians of the bourgeoisie are fond of talking about the progressive role of the capitalist state. They claim that only this state has brought the people full freedom, that it is the highest type of democracy, that it is "government of the people, for the people and by the people". Revisionists are particularly vociferous in this respect depicting the bourgeois state as some kind of a force standing above classes, equally restraining both labour and capital. The capitalist state, in the opinion of the revisionists, has ceased to be the organ of only one class, the capitalist class, and now serves all classes in society. There is, however, absolutely no evidence to support the statements of the revisionists about the progressive nature of the contemporary bourgeois state.

At the dawn of capitalism the bourgeois state really had some progressive features: it helped to introduce and develop capitalist production relations, which were more advanced than feudal relations. Even in its heyday, however, the bourgeois state was not a democracy for all, but only for the select, for the bourgeoisie. The democracy of capitalist society, Lenin wrote, is democracy for the negligible minority, for the rich.

The bourgeois state in any form is dictatorship by the capitalists, the machine for the suppression of the working class and all working people. The degree and form may differ, but it always employs coercion against its class enemies. With the advent of imperialism the bourgeois state makes a direct turn towards reaction and assumes the inglorious role of defending the economic basis of capitalism which long ago became a brake on historical progress.

Imperialism is reaction in every direction, first and foremost in the direction of state policy. "Both in foreign policy and in home policy imperialism equally strives for a violation of democracy, for reaction. In this sense it is indisputable that imperialism is a '*negation*' of democracy in general, of all democracy."*

State-monopoly capitalism becomes widespread under imperialism. It combines the power of the monopolies with the power of the state into a single machine for enriching the monopolies, crushing the proletarian movement and the national-liberation struggle, attempting to save the capitalist system and unleashing aggressive wars. The state becomes a committee for administering the affairs of the monopoly élite. In the interests of the latter the state constantly interferes in the process of capitalist production, applies various regulating measures and takes over individual branches of the economy in order to ensure the highest profits possible to the monopolies.

The reactionary nature of the home and foreign policies pursued by the contemporary bourgeois state cannot be concealed either by oratory about freedom and democracy, references to bourgeois constitutions or declarations about the civilising mission of capitalism. The constitutions of many

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 23, p. 31.

imperialist states are not wanting in articles proclaiming all manner of freedoms and rights for all citizens—universal suffrage, free elections, freedom of speech and of the press, and so on and so forth. In reality these freedoms often remain a dead letter for the overwhelming majority of citizens, for the working people. They are only fully enjoyed by the bourgeoisie who control all the instruments of economic and political domination.

Universal, direct and equal suffrage, proclaimed in the constitutions of many capitalist countries, is often a formal right. A large number of people are barred from the polls by a whole string of reservations and restrictions. And the elections themselves have little in common with real democracy. All means of pressure and blackmail, from bribery and intimidation to threats and terror, every kind of device and falsification are utilised by the bourgeoisie to gain a majority of seats in parliament. During election campaigns the bourgeoisie makes full use of its control over the press, radio, TV and other mass media to popularise its own parties and candidates. The result is that the elected parliaments usually suit the monopolists. For example, all members of the U.S. Congress are either capitalists or their loyal agents. There is not a single worker among them, although the working class makes up half of all the voters. There are only a few women in the U.S. Congress, while women constitute half the electorate.

Formally elections are equally representative, but this is not the case in practice. At the parliamentary elections in France in 1958 the Communist Party polled 4 million votes and gained ten seats, while the reactionary de Gaullist party which received a smaller vote won 188 seats.

Nor is the situation any better in regard to the freedom of speech, press, conscience and many other freedoms in the "free" capitalist world.

The "free" world of capitalism has millions of unemployed. In other words, bourgeois rule is unable to ensure the right to work for everyone, not to mention the rights to rest and leisure and social security.

However much the capitalists and their henchmen boast about the capitalist paradise, Khrushchov recently said, capitalism "remains a system of oppression of millions upon

millions of people by a small clique of exploiters. It remains a system where poverty and mass unemployment of the working people prevail". The essence of "freedom" in the imperialist world is freedom to exploit the working class and all working people not only at home, but also in other countries which fall under the iron heel of the monopolies.

Under imperialism, the financial oligarchy increasingly resorts to the most reactionary methods of government—to outright terrorist dictatorship, to fascism; it relies on the army and the police as a last resort to protect it from the people's wrath.

Mankind has not forgotten the horrors of the fascist regimes of Hitler and Mussolini in Europe, the horrors of the Second World War unleashed by fascism. Dangerous signs of fascism, however, have reappeared in some capitalist countries. Complete subordination of the state to the biggest monopolies, militarisation of the economy, expansion of the state machine, the frenzied drive against the working class and the communist movement, persecution of peace supporters and members of other progressive organisations, racial discrimination and abolition of the remnants of democratic freedoms—this is the content of the domestic policy pursued by contemporary imperialist states.

West Germany, for example, has taken the reactionary road. It has banned the Communist Party, is persecuting the democratic forces and giving every encouragement to fascist and revenge-seeking organisations. Many well-known Nazi leaders hold important government posts, and most Bundeswehr high-ranking officers are former Nazi generals.

The foreign policy of contemporary imperialist states is also reactionary. Posing as champions of "liberation" of the colonial peoples, the imperialists, headed by the U.S. monopolies, are actually waging a bitter struggle against the national-liberation movement and are imposing in new forms the very same colonialism which is so hated by the peoples. To gain control over countries which have formally won their independence, the imperialists inveigle them into their aggressive blocs, make use of so-called economic "aid" to less-developed countries and many other means. They support reactionary regimes (for example, Chiang Kai-shek regime on Taiwan), engage in the arms race, prepare for

another war and set up a ring of military bases around the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

The imperialists, characteristically enough, are pursuing their reactionary domestic and foreign policies under the flag of struggle against the "communist menace" from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, despite the fact that neither the Soviet Union nor any other socialist country threatens anyone. On the contrary, the states of the socialist system headed by the Soviet Union are the most consistent fighters for peace, for peaceful coexistence with the capitalist countries.

Although every bourgeois state is a tool of the exploiters, the form it assumes is a matter of concern to the working class. Despite the restricted nature of bourgeois democracy, it affords the working class more favourable conditions than open dictatorship for successful struggle against the bourgeoisie and for socialism. That is why the working class in the capitalist countries, heading all the progressive forces, persistently combats the onslaught of the reactionaries on democratic freedoms and the people's rights.

### 3. Dictatorship of the Proletariat

Communist society does not grow out of capitalism directly and at once. Between capitalism and socialism "lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*" *

#### *Dictatorship of the Proletariat as a Qualitatively New Type of State*

The dictatorship of the proletariat arises as a result of the successful socialist revolution and the thorough demolition of the bourgeois state machine. It is a qualitatively new type of state and differs radically from the previous states in regard to its class nature, the forms of state or-

* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, 1958, pp. 32-33.

ganisation and the role it is destined to play. All previous types of state were tools of the exploiting classes used for the subjection of the working people and designed to reinforce the system of exploitation and to perpetuate the division of society into oppressors and oppressed. The dictatorship of the proletariat, however, is the rule of the working class which, together with all other working people, destroys capitalism and builds a new society, a society without hostile classes and exploitation.

"If we translate the Latin, scientific, historical-philosophical term 'dictatorship of the proletariat' into simple language," Lenin wrote, "it means just the following:

"Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited in the struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, in the process of this overthrow, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system, in the whole struggle for the complete abolition of classes."*

The dictatorship of the proletariat is the *crux* of Marxism. Only dictatorship, the undivided power of the proletariat, enables the proletariat to put an end to capitalism and build socialism. The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat has naturally always been, and remains, the pivot of the ideological struggle of Marxism-Leninism against reformism and revisionism. Lenin called the dictatorship of the proletariat the touchstone for testing the real understanding and recognition of Marxism. To be a Marxist it is not enough to recognise the struggle of classes, he said. You can only be a Marxist if you extend recognition of the class struggle to recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin implacably fought against the reformist leaders of the Second International and revisionists who denied the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. He tirelessly proved that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only means for building socialism. And history has fully corroborated him. It is due to the dictatorship of the pro-

* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, 1951, p. 223.

letariat that socialism scored complete and final victory in the Soviet Union, and that other countries are successfully advancing along the socialist road.

Present-day revisionists, however, continue to deny the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, although they do so in more refined ways than their predecessors. Unable to ignore the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the countries of the socialist world, they regard it not as a universal, law-governed form of transition from capitalism to socialism, but as a national form applicable only to economically backward countries like tsarist Russia. In highly developed countries, in the opinion of the revisionists, the transition to socialism will be achieved via "pure democracy", meaning bourgeois democracy.

The views of the reformists and revisionists run counter to history, which convincingly shows that it is impossible to build socialism without the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the course of socialist construction, the dictatorship of the proletariat solves a number of major problems which determine the main aspects of its activity. We shall now examine these aspects.

### *The Main Aspects of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

In the transition period, as we saw in the previous chapter, the class struggle does not end, and at certain moments becomes very acute. Deprived of political power, the bourgeoisie of any country will not reconcile itself to its defeat and the loss of its domination and privileges. It therefore frenziedly resists the victorious proletariat.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary for overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, for defeating it in fierce class battles. "The dictatorship of the proletariat," Lenin wrote, "is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful enemy*, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow...."*

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* Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, p. 91.

This is the first, *coercive* aspect of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The suppression of the bourgeoisie, however, is not an aim in itself for the proletariat. Its main aim is to build socialism, to create a new, socialist economy. What makes this task so difficult is that the socialist revolution begins when there are no ready economic forms of socialism. It is the task of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the proletarian state, to organise the economic life of society, to build up a new type of economy superior to capitalism, the economy of socialism. "The dictatorship of the proletariat," Lenin wrote, "is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force.... The proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is the essence. This is the source of the strength and the guarantee of the inevitable complete triumph of communism."*

This is the second, *constructive* aspect of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The proletariat does not create the new, socialist system single-handed, but in close alliance with the non-proletarian working people, mainly the peasants. In the course of the struggle against the bourgeoisie and of socialist construction, the working class re-educates these people. This is a very hard task, much more difficult than open struggle against the bourgeoisie. Prolonged, painstaking educational work is necessary to convince the peasants of the advantages of collective farming. This is one of the cardinal tasks of the proletarian state. What is needed to enable the proletariat to lead the peasants and the petty-bourgeois sections in general, Lenin pointed out, "is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of one class, its strength of organisation and discipline, its centralised power based on all the achievements of culture, science and technology of capitalism, its proletarian affinity to the mentality of every toiler, its prestige with the scattered, less-developed toilers in the countryside or in petty industry...."**

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, 1951, p. 222.

** *Ibid.*, p. 210.

This is the third, *educative* aspect of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

All these main aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it should be stressed, are organically interlinked and constitute a unified whole. But the main thing in the dictatorship of the proletariat is the *building of a new society and re-education* of the millions of small owners, peasants, into active builders of socialism. At the same time we must not underestimate the coercive aspect of the proletarian dictatorship. The working class has more than once paid with its blood for underestimating this aspect, for being too soft-hearted and for making concessions to the bourgeoisie. The Paris Commune in 1871 and the revolutions in Germany, Hungary and Finland from 1918 to 1919 were drowned in seas of blood. Thousands of the finest sons of the Hungarian working class perished at the hands of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in October 1956. All this conclusively shows that the working people have no other road to socialism except through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

### *Dictatorship of the Proletariat—the Highest Type of Democracy*

Bourgeois ideologists and their reformist hangers-on shout from the roof-tops about "universal democracy", "democracy for all", which is supposed to exist in the capitalist world. They hold up this "pure" bourgeois democracy in contrast to the dictatorship of the proletariat which is supposed to be a bureaucratic, undemocratic rule.

In reality the very opposite is the case. The much-vaunted bourgeois democracy, as we have already seen, is merely a screen for the omnipotence of the moneybags and the actual lack of rights of the working people. The aim of bourgeois democracy is to perpetuate the capitalist system, the exploitation of the millions of working people by the negligible minority of the rich.

Only the proletarian state is truly democratic. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a qualitatively new *democracy of the highest type*. This, as Lenin wrote, is democ-

racy for the overwhelming majority of the people and the exclusion of the exploiters and oppressors from this democracy. In the process of its development it increasingly turns into socialist democracy *of the entire people.*

The qualitatively new type of democracy under the dictatorship of the proletariat stems from its very nature, its aims and purposes. Only through a firm alliance with all the working people and with the democratic forces, only with the support of the masses can the proletariat break down the resistance of the exploiting classes, retain power, build socialism and in this way bring the people a life of happiness. That is why the *alliance of the working class* and the non-proletarian sections of town and country, above all the *peasants*, constitutes the basis, the *supreme principle* of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the fullest and all-round expression of the genuine democracy of the proletarian state.

The alliance of the working class with the other working people of town and country is founded on the community of their basic political and economic interests, on the common desire to abolish exploitation and build socialism. Only socialism is capable of emancipating the workers from capitalist wage-slavery and the peasants and other non-proletarian working sections from ruin and poverty. It was in joint struggle against exploitation, for the new, socialist system that the alliance of the working class with all the working people and democratic forces arose and is developing. It is the source of the indestructible might of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The working class, however, only needs an alliance with the petty-bourgeois sections in which it plays the leading role. The peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie are inconsistent. They are, at the same time, both working people and small owners and they often vacillate between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Only the proletariat, the most advanced, consistently revolutionary and organised class, headed by the Marxist party, is capable of overcoming their vacillation, wresting them away from the bourgeoisie and leading them along the socialist road.

A primary distinction of proletarian democracy is that it not only proclaims the rights of the working people but also provides the conditions for their exercise. Under the

dictatorship of the proletariat the working people possess not formal rights, as in a bourgeois state, but they actually govern the country and directly, or through their representatives, manage its entire economic, political and cultural life.

The proletarian state guarantees the exercise of democratic rights by providing the corresponding material facilities. The working people own all the means of production, and this enables them to manage the country's economy and to exercise their right to work. Schools, universities, scientific and cultural institutions, health and holiday homes give them the opportunity to exercise their rights to education and to rest and leisure. The working people have at their disposal printshops, stocks of paper, radio stations, the best buildings, etc., and this enables them to enjoy freedom of the press, speech, assembly, freedom of organisation, etc.

The working people actively take part in the political life of the country, in state administration, through their wide participation in the Soviets or other state bodies, in numerous committees and commissions set up by the Soviets and also through their own social organisations. In a word, proletarian democracy, as Lenin said, is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy.

### *Various Forms of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

The transition from capitalism to socialism can only take place through the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, as it is the necessary content of the transition period, the dictatorship of the proletariat can assume different forms in different countries. "All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable," Lenin stated, "but not all will do so in exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the rate of socialist transformations in the various aspects of social life."*

The form of the dictatorship of the proletariat depends

* Lenin, *Against Revisionism*, Moscow, 1959, p. 323.

above all on the concrete historical conditions in a country, i.e., on the level of economic development, the alignment of class forces and the acuteness of the class struggle, the national and historical traditions of the people and on the international situation.

In 1917 the revolutionary action of Russia's working class brought into being such a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the *Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.* In a number of other European and Asian countries another form of the dictatorship of the proletariat arose, the *People's Democracy.*

What are the differences between such forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the People's Democracy and the Soviets?

Firstly, a People's Democracy allows the existence of a number of parties standing for socialist construction and recognising the leading role of the Communist Party. In China, for example, in addition to the Communist Party, there are the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang (the party of the urban petty bourgeoisie and a section of the national bourgeoisie), the Democratic League (the party of petty-bourgeois sections of the intellectuals), the Workers' and Peasants' Democratic Party and so on. There is also a multi-party system in Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union, however, has a one-party system, because after the October Revolution the petty-bourgeois parties of Russia refused to co-operate with the Communists and sided with the counter-revolutionaries.

Secondly, the People's Democracies have a people's (national) front—a mass organisation which unites the most diverse sections of the people for the purpose of building socialism. The people's front is a specific, organisational form of the alliance between the working class, the peasants, intellectuals and even the petty-bourgeoisie and part of the middle bourgeoisie. The working class and its party, however, play the leading role. The Soviet Union had no such organisation.

Thirdly, in the European People's Democracies the existing parliamentary forms and traditions are used in the fight against capitalism and for socialism. In autocratic Russia

the parliamentary system was not widely developed and it had no parliamentary traditions.

People's Democracy, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, reflects the specific development of the socialist revolution in conditions when imperialism is weakened and the correlation of forces is changing in favour of socialism. It is also dependent upon the historical and national peculiarities of the countries which have embarked on the socialist road of development.

History has so far produced two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Soviets and the People's Democracy. But other forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat could also arise. In those cases, too, the leading role of the working class and its Marxist party is absolutely essential. "The transition from capitalism to communism certainly cannot but yield a tremendous abundance and variety of political forms, but the essence will inevitably be the same: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*,"* Lenin pointed out.

### *The Leading Role of the Marxist Party in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*

The Marxist party, as the advanced, politically conscious and organised detachment of the working class, is that leading force which brings about the overthrow of the political rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. To capture power is a difficult thing, but it is much more difficult to retain power, to finally defeat the overthrown bourgeoisie, and it is incredibly harder (a thousand times more difficult, as Lenin put it) to eradicate the private-property instincts of millions upon millions of peasants and other small owners, to wrest them away from the bourgeoisie and turn them into politically conscious builders of socialism. The working class is only capable of accomplishing these extremely hard tasks and building socialism and then communism if it maintains the strictest organisation and discipline and is confident that it has chosen the right road. Only *the Marxist party* can organise the proletariat, maintain iron discipline in its ranks, educate the working class, protect it from petty-bourgeois

* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 1, 1951, p. 234.

influence, direct its political activities and, through it, influence all the working people. That is why the successful building of socialism is inconceivable "without an iron party tempered in the struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses".*

Following the victory of the socialist revolution, the Marxist-Leninist party becomes the party of the ruling class. This places special responsibility upon it and immeasurably enhances its role as the leader of the working class. The party, utilising its knowledge of the objective laws of social development, summing up and drawing upon the revolutionary experience of the people, directs all the economic, political and cultural activities of the proletarian state. It maps out a single political line in all spheres of the country's life and works to ensure the application of this line.

Under the dictatorship of the proletariat the unity of the Marxist party is more important than ever before. Only if there is unity of will and action among all its members is the party capable of giving society leadership, of upholding and consolidating the rule of the working class and organising the construction of socialism and communism. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist and Workers' parties in all the other socialist countries are irreconcilably opposed to any factionalists and dissidents who seek to undermine the unity of the party.

The revisionists deny the leading role of the party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, asserting that its leadership results in a violation of the principles of socialist democracy. They demand that the trade unions and other social organisations, not the party, should exercise leadership in society's economic and political life.

The views of the revisionists are shattered by history which proves that the leading role of the Marxist party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat, far from running counter to the principles of democracy, contributes to its development and improvement.

The Marxist party exercises its leading role through the

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 367.

system of state bodies and numerous social organisations—trade unions, co-operatives, all kinds of youth, sport, artistic and other organisations. The party unites the efforts of these organisations and directs them towards one goal; it does not substitute for state and other bodies, but stimulates their initiative to the utmost and strives for the broadest democracy in their activities. Through the network of state and social organisations the party is connected with the people, teaches and educates them and learns from them. The party solves all the principal problems of socialist construction together with the people, with the entire proletarian state in which the people are widely represented.

The Marxist party constantly works to strengthen the proletarian state, to develop democracy, to enlist more and more people in administering the country. The broad ties between the party and the people which are already formed in the course of the struggle against capitalism, grow during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat into the *solid unity of the party and the people*. This is where the strength of the Marxist party and the earnest of success of its great cause lies.

## 4. The Soviet Socialist State as an Instrument for Building Socialism and Communism

In the previous section we have ascertained the general features of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the state of a qualitatively new, socialist type, and we have shown that its chief task is to organise the building of socialism. Now let us see how the socialist state copes with this great task, let us analyse its role in building socialism and communism.

### *The Functions of the Socialist State During the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism*

The Soviet state passes through two main periods in its development. The diverse and intricate problems which it solves in home and foreign policies in each of these periods are reflected in its corresponding *functions*. These functions change in accordance with changes in the eco-

nomic basis, the correlation of class forces in the country and the international position.

The first period in the development of the Soviet state covers the time from the moment the proletariat won power (October 1917) up to the abolition of the exploiting classes and the victory of socialism, i.e., the transition period from capitalism to socialism.

This period was marked by the existence of more than one mode of production in the economy and a bitter class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The working class was faced with the task of breaking down the resistance of the bourgeoisie and building socialism in alliance with all the other working people. The functions of the socialist state were shaped accordingly.

*Suppression of the exploiting classes* is one of the most important functions in the activities of the proletarian state *within the country* in the transition period. Any form of proletarian state must suppress the exploiters, but the ways it can be done depend on the conditions. The Soviet Union, besides political (disfranchisement) and economic (confiscation of property, higher taxes, etc.) methods, also employed armed means of suppression because the exploiters fought the people's government with arms.

*Organisational-economic* work, i.e., the activities of the state in building a socialist economy and directing the country's entire economic life is the next very important function of the Soviet state in the transition period. The aim of the state is to ensure the economic victory of socialism over capitalism, to achieve a social organisation of labour higher than under capitalism. Having nationalised the basic means of production, the proletarian state in the very first months of its existence takes over key positions in the economy and organises the planned management of the economy on a scientific foundation. Under the guidance of the Communist Party, the state carries out the socialist industrialisation of the country and the collectivisation of agriculture and, on this basis, constantly develops and improves production and raises the standard of living of the people. As socialism makes progress, the organisational-economic function of socialism embraces literally all branches of the economy.

The building of socialism, however, is not confined to the creation of a socialist economy. It is inconceivable without a systematic advance in the social consciousness and culture of the people, without overcoming the survivals of capitalism in the minds of people. It is therefore natural that the communist education of the working people, their general educational, professional and cultural advance is one of the important tasks of the socialist state. This is all the more essential, since the exploiters had spiritually enslaved the working people for centuries, had done everything to throttle their desire for culture and knowledge. The socialist state carries out a cultural revolution, which is an important element of the socialist revolution. The activities of the state in organising the cultural advance and education of the working people constitute its *cultural-educative function.*

In *foreign policy* the functions of the socialist state consist of *work for peace* among nations and *defence of the country* from external imperialist aggression. The Decree on Peace was the first decree of the Soviet Government. But in response to the sincere desire of the proletarian state for peace came the armed intervention of a group of imperialist pirates who wanted to restore the rule of the exploiters by force of arms. The working people took up arms, defeated the counter-revolutionaries and interventionists and then began peaceful, socialist construction.

At the same time as it tirelessly champions peace, the socialist state constantly works to reinforce the country's defences, to strengthen its armed forces.

### *Functions of the Socialist State During the Transition from Socialism to Communism*

The second period in the development of the Soviet state is the period of the gradual transition from socialism to communism.

The building of socialism has wrought thorough-going changes in the country's economic life. The different modes of production have been abolished and the exploiting classes have vanished. The socialist basis, founded on social ownership, has become firmly rooted in all branches of the economy.

The changes in the economic basis have brought about changes in the socialist superstructure, specifically in the *internal functions* of the socialist state. The function of suppressing the hostile classes has been obviated, for after the exploiting classes had been abolished there was no one to suppress. The state now uses measures of compulsion only against persons who violate socialist law. At the same time the state takes constant care to protect the rights and freedoms of the people and socialist law and order. It displays special concern for safeguarding the economic basis of socialism, socialist property, because its utmost development and consolidation is an indispensable condition for communist construction. *Protection of socialist property and also of the rights and freedoms of the citizens and of socialist law and order* are important functions of the socialist state. They originated in the first stage of its existence and fully developed with the building of socialism.

The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union has led to the fullest development of the principal functions of the socialist state—namely, the organisational-economic and cultural-educative functions.

In view of the rapid growth of the economy the *organisational-economic* function has become much more complicated and diverse. During the transition from capitalism to socialism the organisational-economic activity of the state was aimed at ensuring the economic victory of the socialist forces over the capitalist forces within the country; now that socialism has been built its aim is to create the material and technical basis of communism and to transform socialist relations of production into communist, to ensure the further rise in the people's standard of living.

The building of socialism has notably changed the *cultural-educative* function of the state as well. The transition to communism will be all the swifter, the higher the social consciousness of the people and their cultural level. One of the cardinal tasks in the period of communist construction is educating the new man, a person of all-round development who is free from the survivals of the past, a conscious member of society for whom labour for the good of the community is not a duty but a prime want.

The *functions* of the Soviet state in *foreign policy* also develop further in the period of transition from socialism to communism. This is connected with the very important changes in the international situation. The world socialist system arose after the Second World War, and relations of fraternal assistance and co-operation were established between the countries of this system. *Consolidation and development of fraternal co-operation with the other socialist countries* is a new function of the Soviet state resulting from the formation of the world socialist system.

Alongside this new function, the *function of working for world peace and maintaining normal relations with all countries* has been preserved and extended. The birth and consolidation of the world socialist system and the growing might of the Soviet Union have created the real possibility of preventing a third world war. The Soviet state is doing everything in its power to translate this possibility into reality. At the same time it is strengthening the country's defence in every way: as long as imperialism with its aggressive war policy exists the Soviet Union cannot consider itself safe from attack. Defence of the socialist country, *reliable safeguarding of the country's defence and security*, is a major function of the socialist state. At the same time the Soviet Union regards as its international duty, together with other socialist countries, to ensure the reliable defence and security of the entire socialist system.

Development of the internal and external functions of the socialist state results in the further enhancement of the activity of the people, the enrolment of millions of people in the direct administration of economic and cultural affairs and in active struggle for peace and the security of nations. Socialist democracy is blossoming—this is expressed most fully in the conversion of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat into the state of the entire people.

### *From the State of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to the State of the Entire People*

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as we have seen, exists during the transition period from capitalism to socialism. The working class needs it to crush

the resistance of the exploiters, to abolish the oppression of man by man and to build socialism, together with the peasants and other working sections of society.

The working class in the Soviet Union successfully carried out this epoch-making task with the aid of all state power: socialism won completely and finally in the Soviet Union. With this victory the conditions which necessitated the dictatorship of the proletariat disappeared. "The working class," in the words of the Programme of the C.P.S.U., "is the only class in history that does not aim to perpetuate its power.

"Having brought about the complete and final victory of socialism—the first phase of communism—and the transition of society to the full-scale construction of communism, the dictatorship of the proletariat has fulfilled its historic mission and has ceased to be indispensable in the U.S.S.R. from the point of view of the tasks of internal development. The state which arose as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat has, in the new, contemporary stage, become a state of the entire people, an organ expressing the interests and will of the people as a whole."

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat is *a transitory phenomenon of history*. It must arise when the working people of a country are confronted with the task of building socialism. When socialism triumphs completely and finally, the dictatorship of the proletariat comes to an end. When the victory of socialism is secured, the working class voluntarily renounces its rule over society and transforms its dictatorship into a state of the entire people.

This, naturally, does not mean that the working class loses its leading role in society. Being the most advanced, organised force of Soviet society, it directs social life in the period of full-scale communist construction as well. Only with the disappearance of classes, i.e., with the building of communism, will the working class complete its mission as leader of society.

The transformation of the Soviet Union from a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the entire people is a development without precedent in history. Until socialism appeared the state has always been the instrument of unlimited rule by one class. In the Soviet

Union, however, for the first time a state arose which was not the dictatorship of any particular class, but the *instrument of all of society, of the entire people.*

The experience of building socialism and communism in the Soviet Union shows that the dictatorship of the proletariat ceases to be a necessity before the state withers away. But the state as an organisation of the entire people will be preserved until the complete victory of communism.

In the period of full-scale communist construction, the Soviet people are faced with a great task—to carry out a sweeping programme of a mighty advance in the economy, culture and the standard of living of the people and also the education of a new man. This task cannot be accomplished without further strengthening and developing the socialist state.

With each step towards communism the country's life becomes more diverse, economic and cultural ties between its areas are extended and the scale of construction grows very swiftly. All this increases the organising role of the Soviet socialist state, demands constant improvement and extension of its organisational-economic and cultural-educative activities.

On the other hand, the successful accomplishment of the sweeping tasks of communist construction is inconceivable without the further development of democracy, the active participation of all the working people in the building of communism.

"*All-round extension and perfection of socialist democracy, active participation of all citizens in the administration of the state, in the management of economic and cultural development, improvement of the government apparatus, and increased control over its activity by the people constitute the main direction in which socialist statehood develops in the period of the building of communism.*" (The Programme of the C.P.S.U.)

In recent years, particularly after the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., the Party and the Government have done much work to restore the Leninist standards in Party and state life and to further extend Soviet democracy. The Leninist principle of democratic centralism has been developed in every respect; it ensures the proper combination of lead-

ership from the centre with stimulation of the people's initiative on the periphery, extension of the rights of the Union republics, local governmental bodies and economic executives. The Union republics now have under their jurisdiction the majority of enterprises which were formerly subordinated to all-Union ministries. Legislation, territorial administration and a number of other important economic, state and cultural matters have been placed in the hands of the Union republics. Managers of enterprises have received greater rights in using material and financial resources and, what is the main thing, the right of planning locally the operation of a factory or plant, state or collective farm.

The Communist Party has also taken a number of important measures to improve the state apparatus, simplify it, reduce the cost of its maintenance, cut out elements of bureaucracy in its work and enlist the people into the administration of the state. The reorganisation of management in industry and construction in 1957 brought governmental leadership directly to the localities. This makes it possible to draw more widely on the practical experience of the working people themselves in solving economic problems and to enhance the role of the people in economic development.

The measures of the Party aimed at improving the management of agriculture have ensured an expansion of production and have stimulated the initiative of the collective farmers.

The development of democracy in socialist society is also manifested in *the increasing role of the social organisations of the working people*—trade unions, Young Communist League, co-operatives, cultural and educational associations. Social organisations have always been true assistants of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, the vehicles of their policies. In the course of building communism their functions in solving important state problems will constantly be extended.

The role of the trade unions in fulfilling major tasks of economic and cultural development is increasing. The trade unions are schools of communist education, schools of economic management and state administration. They actively take part in planning and organising production at

factories and in socialist emulation. They are in charge of many questions of social security, the provision of cultural and other services to the workers, the protection of their labour, health, etc.

Trade unions stimulate the labour and political activities of the workers, raise their communist consciousness, organise emulation in communist labour; they train the workers in administering state and social affairs, draw them into promoting continuous technical progress and growth of labour productivity; they see that the workers' living conditions are improved and that their spiritual requirements are satisfied.

The Young Communist League is making a big contribution to the building of communism and the communist education of the youth. The Y.C.L. stimulates the creative activities and work of the Soviet youth, strives to bring up a generation of people who will live and work under communism and will manage the affairs of communist society. The Y.C.L. trains young men and women to work for the good of the community, it sees to the advance of their general education and technical knowledge, it brings them up in the spirit of the lofty principles of communist morality.

*Co-operatives* (collective farms, consumer co-operatives and other co-operative organisations) will gain in importance. Scientific, technical, cultural, educational, sport and other societies and organisations will be further developed. All of them represent different forms whereby the people are enlisted into communist construction, forms of bringing up the working people in the communist spirit.

As society draws nearer to communism, individual functions performed by state bodies will be gradually transferred to social organisations. Social organisations already take charge of sport. People's teams for the maintenance of public order, courts of honour and other social organisations, hand in hand with the militia and judicial authorities, are successfully waging a struggle against those who break Soviet law and the rules of communist morality.

In the next few years management of places of entertainment, libraries, clubs and other cultural and educational establishments, now under the jurisdiction of the state, will be turned over to social organisations. Their activities in

maintaining public order will be extended. The trade unions, Y.C.L. and other social organisations will be empowered to initiate legislation, i.e., to submit bills to the Supreme Soviet.

The handing over of individual functions from state agencies to social organisations does not weaken the role of the socialist state in building communism. On the contrary, fulfilment by social organisations of functions now handled by the state will broaden and strengthen the political foundation of socialist society, will ensure the further development of socialist democracy. The Soviet state will be able to concentrate its efforts on the development of the economy, the material basis of communist society.

The new Programme of the C.P.S.U. envisages broad measures for the further development of socialist democracy. Improvement in the forms of popular representation and the democratic principles of the Soviet electoral system; extension of the practice of country-wide discussion on the most important questions of communist construction and draft laws; utmost extension of the forms of popular control over the activities of government and managerial agencies and making this control more efficient; systematic renewal of the composition of leading bodies and the more consistent implementation of the principle that all leaders are elected and are accountable to the electors and its gradual application to all leading personnel in state bodies, social organisations and cultural institutions—these are the major means through which the Party seeks to *enlist literally all Soviet citizens in administering the affairs of society*.

The state of the entire people which arose in the Soviet Union as a result of the victory of socialism is a new, higher stage in the development of the socialist state, a very important step towards the development of socialist statehood into communist public self-government.

### *Growing Role of the C.P.S.U. in the Period of Full-Scale Communist Construction*

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as is recorded in the new Rules adopted by the 22nd Congress, is the tried and tested militant vanguard of the Soviet people, which

unites on a voluntary basis the more advanced, more politically conscious section of the working class, collective-farm peasants and intellectuals.

The Communist Party, during the sixty years of its existence, has traversed an illustrious road of struggle and victory. It led the working class and the working peasants to victory in the Great October Socialist Revolution, to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and it ensured the complete and final victory of socialism. The socio-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people was formed and gained strength under the Party's leadership. From the party of the working class the *Communist Party has now become the party of all Soviet people.*

The Communist Party, as the highest form of socio-political organisation of the people, directs their great constructive work and organises and plans scientifically the all-out effort for communism. Through the system of state and social organisations the Party carries the idea of work for communism to the people in the form of definite tasks and concentrates the efforts of the personnel at each enterprise, of all Soviet people on their successful accomplishment. The Party sees far into the future, indicates the road ahead to the people and arouses in them great creative energies. In all its activity the Communist Party is guided by Marxism-Leninism, and its Programme is elaborated on this basis. The Party Programme outlines the main tasks of the Party for the period of communist construction.

The Programme states: "The period of full-scale communist construction is characterised by a further *enhancement of the role and importance of the Communist Party as the leading and guiding force of Soviet society....*

"The enhancement of the role of the Party in the life of Soviet society in the new stage of its development derives from:

"the growing scope and complexity of the tasks of communist construction, which call for a higher level of political and organisational leadership;

"the growth of the creative activity of the masses and the participation of fresh millions of working people in the administration of state affairs and of production;

"the further development of socialist democracy, the enhancement of the role of social organisations, the extension of the rights of the Union republics and local organisations;

"the growing importance of the theory of scientific communism, of its creative development and propaganda, the necessity for improving the communist education of the working people and struggling to overcome the survivals of the past in the minds of people."

Corresponding to the new stage in the development of Soviet society is a new, higher stage in the development of the Party, in its political, ideological and organisational work. The Party will constantly perfect the forms and methods of its work so that its leadership of the people, its guidance in building the material and technical basis of communism and development of the spiritual life of Soviet society, should conform to the growing requirements of the period of full-scale communist construction.

The Rules adopted by the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U. are a reliable organisational instrument of the Party in its work for the victory of communism. The Rules make greater demands on each Party member. Each Communist must be a model in his communist attitude to labour, adherence to communist ideas, uncompromising attitude to shortcomings, money-grubbing and parasites. The Rules demand a solicitous attitude to man, devotion to the Party and the people. The Rules provide for the further development of democracy within the Party and enhancement of the role of local Party organs and primary organisations. They elevate still higher the role of the C.P.S.U. as the inspirer and organiser of communist construction.

The further extension of the Party's bonds with the people is an indispensable condition of successful work for communism. The Party regards as its sacred duty to constantly seek the advice of the people on vital questions of home and foreign policy and to widely enlist them in its work.

The development of the socialist state, extension of the functions of social organisations and the spread of

socialist democracy determine the need for ever deeper and multifarious activities of the Party among the people, ever greater increase of its influence among them.

*The leading and guiding activities of the C.P.S.U., its organisational and educational work are a principal factor in the victory of communism.*

## 5. The Withering Away of the State

We have learned previously what a great role the socialist state plays in the building of socialism and communism.

Revisionists, however, challenge the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the state, deny the leading role of the state in socialist and communist construction. From their point of view, guidance by the state of the economic and cultural life of socialist society is impermissible, because it supposedly results in the violation of democracy, the spread of bureaucracy and the placing of the state machine over society. The revisionists identify the dictatorship of the proletariat with coercion. Dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy are incompatible, they declare, so "down with dictatorship!"

The revisionists distort the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat, absolutise only one of its aspects, the coercive. They refuse to see that the main task of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to organise socialist society, to educate the people, to draw them into the building of socialism. Such immense tasks can be accomplished only by a genuinely democratic state such as the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We have seen that the socialist state is confronted with even more intricate tasks in the period of communist construction. Communism is the result of the conscious creative endeavour of the people, their heroic and selfless work. But the creative efforts of the people must be united, organised and concentrated on the achievement of a single goal. The socialist state, led by the Communist Party, is the force which organises the building of the new society. Hence the need for the existence of the socialist state during

the entire period of communist construction, the need for its constant development and improvement.

The consolidation and development of the socialist state, however, does not at all imply that it will exist for ever. *The development of socialist statehood will gradually lead to its transformation into public, communist self-government*, in which the Soviets, trade-unions, co-operatives and other social organisations will be united.

The functions of social administration, like functions of directing the economic and cultural life now discharged by the state, will naturally be preserved under communism as well. And in conformity with society's development they will continuously develop and improve. But the nature and way of discharging them will differ from those under socialism. As society advances to communism, the organs of state administration will gradually lose their political, class character. Merging ultimately with society, they will become organs of public self-government, through which *all members of society* will manage economic and cultural affairs. The state will wither away.

But it would be wrong, Khrushchov says, to understand the withering away of the state in a simplified way, like the falling of autumn leaves, only the bare branches remaining. The withering away of the state is a long, gradual process which covers a long historical era. Throughout a definite period features of state administration and public self-government will coexist and be intertwined; only when society becomes fully ready for self-government, i.e., in conditions of developed communism, will the need for a state be obviated. "It will become possible for the state to wither away completely," Lenin wrote, "when society adopts the rule: 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', i.e., when people become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour becomes so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their ability*."*

The building of a developed communist society is the *internal condition* for the withering away of the state. But

* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 299-300.

for its complete withering away certain *external conditions* are also necessary—the victory and entrenchment of socialism in the world. Speaking of the withering away of the state, we must necessarily take into account the international situation. If communism triumphs in a country or group of countries, but armed capitalist powers remain in the world, communist society will be compelled to preserve the state function of defence. This function will only wither away when the danger of attack by reactionary imperialist forces fully disappears.

In the course of building communism state administration is thus gradually transformed into public self-government; and this process is inextricably bound up with further improvement in the work of the state apparatus and the steady development and perfection of socialist democracy.

*CHAPTER XVIII*

# THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

We have seen in the preceding chapter what the state is, how it arose and what types of states are known in history. The following questions now arise: What are the causes for the succession of one type of state by another, why the changes in social systems, the replacement of one ruling class by another? The Marxist-Leninist theory of the social revolution answers these questions.

## 1. The Social Revolution—a Law of Development of an Antagonistic Class Society

### *The Essence, Causes and Significance of the Social Revolution*

The *social revolution* is a deep-going upheaval in the political, economic and ideological life of society. It is the social revolution that brings about the succession of ruling classes and types of states, abolishes old relations of production, introduces new ones and radically changes social views and institutions.

The social revolution is not accidental but *law-governed* following from the material conditions of society's life at definite stages of its development, from its internal contradictions. Pointing to the causes of the social revolution, Marx, in his preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* wrote that at a certain stage of their

development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution.

*The conflict between the new productive forces and the old relations of production constitutes the objective economic foundation of the social revolution.* We have ascertained earlier that relations of production cannot lag behind the development of the productive forces indefinitely. Sooner or later they must conform to them. This conformity results from a social revolution.

A conflict in production is always expressed in a conflict of class interests. The reactionary class, the vehicle of old relations of production, is opposed by the progressive class, the vehicle of new relations of production. Hence the irreconcilable struggle of the progressive class against the reactionary class, of which the social revolution is the highest expression and the consummation.

The old, reactionary class never gives up its rule voluntarily. It uses the full power of the state to preserve the old production relations. To abolish the old production relations and introduce new ones, therefore, the progressive class must gain political power. In other words, whether the new relations of production win or not, ultimately depends on whether the revolutionary class gains state power. Therefore *state power is the basic question of any revolution.*

Social revolutions are of tremendous importance in the life of society. It is only through radical, revolutionary changes that the old, reactionary social system can be abolished and a new, progressive system introduced. Only social revolutions resolve economic and class contradictions which matured in the long period of preceding social development. Only revolution helps to remove obstacles to economic, political and cultural progress in the form of obsolete production relations and their reactionary vehicle, the old classes. The creative energies of the people are awakened in time of social revolution, and millions upon millions of people are drawn into active social life, as a

result of which the process of social development is greatly accelerated. For this reason Marx called revolution the locomotive of history.

### *A Revolutionary Situation. The Role of the Subjective Factor in a Revolution*

A revolution is not made "to order" or at someone's will. Definite historical conditions, objective and subjective prerequisites, are necessary for a revolution.

The sum of objective conditions needed for a revolution is called a *revolutionary situation.* Lenin regarded the following as signs of a revolutionary situation:

1. On the one hand, the impossibility for the ruling classes to live and rule in the old way, the so-called crisis "from above", and on the other, the indignation of the oppressed classes which do not want to live in the old way, the crisis "from below". "Revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters)," * Lenin wrote.

2. Extreme aggravation of the poverty and suffering of the oppressed classes.

3. A considerable increase in the activity of the people. While in ordinary times the people are relatively calm, in conditions of crisis the situation itself impels them to take independent revolutionary action.

Not every revolutionary situation, however, leads to a revolution. There was a revolutionary situation in Russia from 1859 to 1861, but no revolution occurred. A revolutionary situation, the maturity of the objective factor, merely creates the possibility for a victorious revolution. But to turn this possibility into reality the subjective factor too must be ripe, i.e., the revolutionary class must be ready and able to undertake revolutionary mass action which is sufficiently strong to overpower (or undermine) the old government which, as Lenin wrote, will never "fall" until it is "pushed". A victorious socialist revolution is possible only if the working class is organised and politically conscious, if it has reliable allies and the revolution is led by an experienced, battle-seasoned Marxist party.

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 2, 1951, p. 413.

*The Nature and Driving Force of a Revolution*

Social revolutions differ in nature and driving forces. The *nature* of a revolution depends on the class which comes to power and the relations of production introduced as a result of it. For example, a revolution in the course of which the rule of the feudal lords is replaced by the rule of the bourgeoisie and correspondingly new, capitalist relations of production are established instead of feudal relations, bears the nature of a bourgeois revolution.

The *driving forces* of a revolution are the social classes which make the revolution and fight against the reactionary classes for the triumph of new relations of production. One of the classes making the revolution is the leader and it is followed by all the other classes and social groups taking part in the revolution.

What the driving forces of a revolution are and what class is the leader depend both on the nature of the revolution and the historical conditions in which it takes place. In the bourgeois revolutions in the West at the time of capitalism's advance (from the 17th and up to the first half of the 19th century) the driving forces were the peasants and the artisans, while the leader was the bourgeoisie which led all the other fighters against feudalism.

Bourgeois revolutions in the era of imperialism often acquire a strongly pronounced democratic nature (the revolution of 1905-07 and the February revolution of 1917 in Russia). The widest sections of the people take part in them, they put forward their own demands, pursue an independent line and exert a tremendous influence on the course of the revolution. The imperialist bourgeoisie acts as a reactionary class in these revolutions. It is afraid of the full victory of the revolution, fears wide democratisation, because the fuller the freedom and the wider the democracy, the more favourable the conditions for the struggle of the working class against its rule. The monopoly bourgeoisie seeks to end the revolution halfway by coming to terms with the landlords, with the old authority. That is why in the new conditions the monopoly bourgeoisie ceases to be the leader, the driving force of the revolution; in a number of countries it openly supports the counter-

revolution. The proletariat and the peasants, with the proletariat at the head, are the driving force of bourgeois revolutions in the epoch of imperialism.

## 2. The Socialist Revolution. Essence of the Socialist Revolution

The socialist revolution radically differs from all the preceding types of social revolutions.

What is the difference?

Firstly, all previous revolutions did not aim to abolish exploitation, but merely modified its forms. The socialist revolution, however, *abolishes every exploitation for all time* and ushers in the era of construction of a classless society.

Secondly, previous revolutions did not have to create a new economy. They only brought political power into line with the new economic relations which arose within the old society. One of the principal tasks of the socialist revolution is *to create a new economy*, the economy of socialism, which does not arise within the womb of capitalism.

Thirdly, no revolution is marked by such great *activity of the people* as the socialist revolution. In the course of it the proletariat closely surrounds itself with the broad sections of the working people and the democratic forces to fight against capitalism and for socialism.

The working class is the decisive force of the socialist revolution. The proletariat, being the most advanced, revolutionary class, headed by the Marxist party, leads all the working people who are fighting against the old, capitalist society. It organises the attack on capitalism holding political sway. On capturing political power, the working class continues to lead all the working people along the socialist road.

The main question of the socialist revolution is the *winning of political power by the proletariat* and its further development and consolidation. As pointed out earlier, the working class can discharge its mission—abolish capitalism and build a new society—only by creating its own proletarian state. The destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the building of a new, proletarian state is the principal task of the socialist revolution.

### *Inevitability of the Socialist Revolution in the Epoch of Imperialism*

Reformists have always opposed the socialist revolution. They are particularly obstinate in their attempts to refute the Marxist-Leninist theory of the Socialist revolution at the present time, when the movement of mankind from capitalism to socialism is the main feature of history. The reformists, in order to prevent this law-governed process at all costs, to preserve capitalism and divert the working class from revolutionary struggle, claim that in present-day conditions there is no need for a socialist revolution, that the possibility has arisen for the evolution from capitalism to socialism through reforms. Contemporary capitalism, from their viewpoint, has ceased to be the capitalism of which Marx wrote in *Capital*; it has become "people's capitalism", a society without exploiters and exploited. The bourgeois state too has changed, they claim that it has lost its class nature and has become a "welfare state" capable of bringing about socialism by reforms within the framework of the existing political system.

The views of the reformists who deny the need for a socialist revolution have been taken up by contemporary revisionists. The growth of state-monopoly capitalism in a number of capitalist countries is seized on by them as the main argument attesting to the conversion of contemporary capitalism into socialism. Revisionists do not even entertain the idea of destroying the cornerstone of capitalism, private property; they refuse to see that state-monopoly capitalism which they extol, far from abolishing, only concentrates property in the hands of the capitalist state. They deny the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution and the need for a proletarian state.

No "people's capitalism", capitalism without exploiters, no "welfare state" exists under imperialism, nor could there be any. Imperialism possesses an extremely reactionary nature expressed in greater exploitation of the working class, drive on the standard of living and democratic rights of the working people, the arms race and preparations for another world war. All this inevitably deepens the antagonism between the working class and the bourgeoisie, which

is expressed in sharper class struggles, wider, popular movements against imperialism, for an improvement of their standards of living, for peace and democracy. This struggle naturally leads to the socialist revolution, to the abolition of capitalism and to the victory of socialism.

*The socialist revolution is inevitable in the epoch of imperialism.* Only the proletarian revolution is capable of removing capitalist production relations, the formidable obstacle to the development of the modern productive forces, to mankind's progress, and of meeting the most pressing requirements of historical development.

### *Lenin's Theory of the Socialist Revolution*

Marx and Engels exposed the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and arrived at the conclusion that a deepening of this antagonism will lead to the socialist revolution.

They, however, lived at a time when capitalism was on the upgrade and developed more or less evenly. Proceeding from this, they held that the proletarian revolution could be victorious simultaneously in all, or in a majority, of the advanced countries, because at that time any attempt to establish socialism in one country would be crushed by the combined efforts of all the capitalists.

At the turn of the century, when capitalism turned into imperialism and entered its final stage, the conditions for the socialist revolution substantially altered. Lenin advanced a new theory of the revolution corresponding to the epoch of imperialism.

As early as 1905, in his book *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Lenin elaborated the important question of *the bourgeois democratic revolution growing into the socialist revolution.* Analysing the specific features of the revolutionary movement of the working class in the new conditions, above all the specific features of the 1905-07 revolution in Russia, he came to the conclusion that only the proletariat, which is directly interested in taking the revolution right to the end, could and should be the leader of the bourgeois democratic

revolution in the period of imperialism. In the course of the revolution the proletariat at first carries out democratic changes and then proceeds at once from the democratic to the socialist revolution.

The discovery by Lenin of the *possibility of the socialist revolution being victorious at first in a single country* is the most important element in his theory of the revolution. Lenin acted on the principle that the development of capitalist countries under imperialism is uneven, spasmodic. Some countries, which formerly fell behind, overtake and outstrip the economically advanced countries. The balance of forces is upset and conflicts and wars for the redivision of the world break out. As a result, the positions of world capitalism are weakened and the possibility arises of breaking the chain of imperialism at its weakest link. "The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in the various countries," Lenin wrote. "It cannot be otherwise under the commodity production system. From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously *in all* countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois for some time."*

Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution has tremendous practical significance. It unshackles the revolutionary initiative of the working people and makes the working class of each country confident in the victory of its great cause.

### *Formation of the World Socialist System*

Guided by Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution, the working class of Russia, in alliance with the peasants, and headed by the Bolshevik Party, abolished the rule of the landlords and the capitalists and took political power into their own hands. November 7, 1917, (October 25—old style) went down in history as the beginning of a new era in mankind's development, the era of the fall of capitalism and the triumph of the new socialist society. On that historic day Lenin said: "From now on, a new phase in the

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Part 2, 1952, p. 571.

history of Russia begins, and this revolution, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism."*

Lenin's prophetic words came true: socialism triumphed completely and finally in the Soviet Union.

The Great October Socialist Revolution gave a powerful impetus to the world revolutionary movement, it initiated the disintegration of the capitalist system and the general crisis of capitalism. It ushered in the *transition from capitalism to socialism.*

After the Second World War a number of countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe and Asia fell away from the capitalist system. Capitalism ceased to be the only world-wide socio-economic system. Two systems now exist in the world—moribund capitalism and young, growing socialism.

*The world socialist system*, in the words of the Programme of the C.P.S.U., is a social, economic and political community of free, sovereign peoples pursuing the socialist and communist path, united by an identity of interests and goals and the close bonds of international socialist solidarity. The states of this system are located on a huge territory of Europe and Asia, comprising more than a quarter of the earth's land surface. More than 1,000 million people (over one-third of mankind) live in this territory. The socialist countries have a great economic potential: they now produce more than one-third of the world industrial output and about half of the world output of grain.

The world socialist system represents a *qualitatively new type of economic and political relations between countries.* These relations are based on the identity of their economic and political interests and the single Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Social ownership of the means of production is the economic foundation of the socialist system. Its political foundation is the rule of the people headed by the working class. Its ideological foundation is the theory of Marxism-Leninism. All the socialist countries have one goal—the building of socialism and communism.

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* Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 336.

Full equality of states, big and small, non-interference in each other's domestic affairs, respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, fraternal, economic, mutual assistance, close co-operation in the economic, political and cultural spheres—these are the basic principles underlying the relations between the socialist countries. These relations, which embody proletarian internationalism to the full, are without parallel in history. They are a guarantee of the strength and stability of the world socialist system.

The forms of co-operation and mutual assistance between the socialist countries are very diverse. In the economic sphere they are expressed in the co-ordination of national economic plans, full development of mutually advantageous trade, the granting of credits and the exchange of scientific and technical know-how. In the political sphere they consist in joint struggle against imperialism, for peace, socialism, and social progress. In the sphere of culture they are manifested in ever wider and multifarious cultural co-operation between the socialist countries, resulting in greater mutual enrichment of their national cultures.

The world socialist system has now entered a new stage in its development; the Soviet Union is engaged in full-scale communist construction. Other countries are laying the foundations of socialism and some of them have already undertaken the full-scale construction of socialist society.

The decisive victories of socialism in the entire socialist system, the welding together of the socialist countries in one camp and their constantly growing unity and might make the restoration of capitalism impossible not only in the Soviet Union, but also in the other socialist countries. This ensures the full victory of socialism and communism in the socialist system as a whole.

The socialist countries, making use of the laws and advantages of the socialist system, drawing on each other's economic and cultural achievements, are steadily developing their economy and culture in a planned way. Their economic and cultural development is being raised to the same level and the periods of building socialism are shortened. As a result, the prospects of more or less simulta-

neous transition to communism, within the bounds of one historical epoch, are opening up before these countries.

Consolidation of the unity of the world socialist system on the basis of the principles of proletarian internationalism is an indispensable condition for the continued progress of the socialist countries. This unity is incompatible with manifestations of nationalism and national exclusiveness which harm the general interests of the socialist community and, above all, the people of the country in which they occur. Isolation from the socialist camp retards the development of a country, deprives it of the opportunity to utilise the advantages of the world socialist system.

The further strengthening of the unity of the socialist camp and increase in its might and defence potential are one of the most important tasks confronting the peoples in all the countries of the world socialist system.

## 3. Peaceful Coexistence of the Socialist and Capitalist States — an Objective Necessity for Mankind's Development

### *Lenin's Principle of Peaceful Coexistence*

The principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems was formulated and substantiated by Lenin. In the very first hours of the October Revolution, addressing the Second Congress of Soviets, he said: "We reject all clauses dealing with plunder and violence, but we shall welcome all clauses containing provisions for good-neighbourly relations and economic agreements; those we cannot reject."

Lenin was deeply convinced that sooner or later socialism would triumph throughout the world. But he held that this victory could not be achieved simultaneously, in all countries at once. Depending on the condition of the economy, the acuteness of the class struggle, correlation of forces between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and so on, some countries will arrive at socialism sooner than others. Proceeding from this, Lenin drew the conclusion that throughout a certain period of history when

capitalist countries exist alongside socialist states, *coexistence of the socialist and capitalist countries is inevitable.* Lenin was an ardent proponent of peaceful coexistence and the Communist Party and the Soviet Government have made this principle the cornerstone of their foreign policy; its main aim is to ensure peaceful conditions for the building of communism in the Soviet Union and the development of the world socialist system and, together with all the peace-loving peoples, to save mankind from the horrors of a new world war.

*Peaceful coexistence* of the socialist and capitalist states is *an objective necessity for mankind's development.* In present conditions when there are monstrous weapons of destruction and vehicles for their delivery to any point on the globe, when a new world war would take a colossal toll of lives and cause terrific destruction, the question of war and peace has become the overriding issue of our time. The main task now is to *prevent a thermo-nuclear war.* "Today," Khrushchov has said, "the question is not whether peaceful coexistence should be or not, it is and will be if we do not want the madness of a world missile-nuclear war. The main thing is to coexist on a reasonable basis."

Coexistence on a reasonable basis, peaceful coexistence, necessitates renunciation of war as a means of settling international disputes, and their solution by negotiation; equality, mutual understanding and trust between countries; consideration for each other's interests; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; recognition of the right of each nation to solve all its problems by itself; strict respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; promotion of economic and cultural co-operation on the basis of complete equality and mutual benefit. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and all the Marxist parties are devoting much effort to these noble tasks.

Nikita Khrushchov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. and head of the Soviet Government, is an indefatigable champion of peace. His numerous visits to different countries—the United States, France, Austria, Finland, Burma, India, Indonesia and other countries, and his personal contacts with the leaders and peoples of these

countries contribute to strengthening peace and easing international tension.

Particularly significant in this respect is the proposal for general and complete disarmament made on behalf of the Soviet Union by Khrushchov at the 14th Session of the U.N. General Assembly in 1959 and also the basic provisions for a general and complete disarmament treaty submitted to the 15th Session in 1960. These documents clearly demonstrate the sincerity and consistency of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy. The U.S.S.R. not only proclaims the need to disarm, but also has taken appropriate practical steps in its implementation. Between 1955 and 1958 the Soviet Union unilaterally cut the strength of its armed forces by 2,140,000 men.

Consistently applying the principle of peaceful coexistence, the Marxist parties act on the principle that powerful forces capable of upholding and strengthening peace have arisen and are growing in the world. The world socialist system, steadily developing and gaining in strength, is the natural centre of attraction for all peace-loving forces.

A vast peace zone has emerged including, alongside the socialist countries, a large group of peace-loving, non-socialist countries, many of which are states freed from the colonial yoke. More and more countries follow a policy of neutrality and seek to protect themselves from the danger of participating in military blocs.

The people are more actively taking the solution of the problem of war and peace into their own hands, and this is a major factor in the peace struggle. The international working class, the most irreconcilable and consistent fighter against imperialist wars, is at the head of the peace movement.

It is the existence of these powerful peace-loving forces that has enabled the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Marxist parties of other countries to arrive at the conclusion that in our age wars are not inevitable and that mankind is now capable of preventing war as a means of resolving international disputes. "*It is possible to avert a world war*," the Programme of the C.P.S.U. points out, "by the combined efforts of the mighty socialist camp, the peace-loving non-socialist countries, the international

working class and all the forces championing peace." This opens up the prospect of ensuring peaceful coexistence in the entire period during which the social and political issues now dividing the world will be settled.

Because the peace-loving forces have the ability to prevent another world war, it does not mean that every possibility of war is precluded. This possibility will exist as long as capitalism exists. Only communist society will establish eternal peace on earth. In present conditions, however, the unremitting and persistent struggle of the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries and all honest people for peace and the security of the world is resisted by the aggressive forces, headed by the American military élite. They do everything in their power to worsen the international situation, make direct threats against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, accelerate the arms race and fan war hysteria. Faced with the danger of another world war the Soviet Union is compelled to take the necessary measures for strengthening its defences and protecting the Soviet people and the people of the entire socialist camp.

Imperialist reactionary circles have not abandoned their inhuman plans, and this means that peaceful coexistence of states with differing social systems can only be preserved and secured by the selfless struggle of all the peoples against the aggressive plans of the imperialists.

The Communist and Workers' parties are in the van of peace struggle. They are tirelessly exposing all the intrigues and aggressive plans of the imperialists, are keeping the people on the alert, and are firmly and consistently pursuing the Leninist policy of peaceful coexistence of states with differing social systems.

### *Peaceful Coexistence as a Form of the Class Struggle*

Contemporary revisionists and dogmatists distort the essence of the principle of peaceful coexistence. They consider that peaceful coexistence reconciles the contradictions between the socialist and capitalist systems and spells an end to the struggle between the socialist and bourgeois ideologies.

In reality, however, peaceful coexistence does not at all signify reconciliation of the contradictions between socialism and capitalism and the discontinuation of struggle between them. *Peaceful coexistence is a special form of the class struggle between two opposing world systems.* "Peaceful coexistence must be understood correctly," Khrushchov says. "Coexistence is a continuation of the struggle between the two social systems, but struggle by peaceful means, without war, without interference of a state in the domestic affairs of another state... We hold that this is an economic, political and ideological struggle, but not a military struggle."

Peaceful coexistence is the basis for economic competition between socialism and capitalism on an international scale. It represents a unique struggle of socialism and capitalism for the rate and scale of economic and cultural development, for the satisfaction of the people's material and cultural requirements. In the process of this struggle people learn from their own experience which system is capable of satisfying their needs fully.

The course and results of the competition, the struggle of the two opposing systems, determine the entire process of contemporary world development. We should stress that the principle of peaceful coexistence does not signify renunciation of the political struggle, of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, renunciation of the working people's fight for their emancipation from capitalist slavery. On the contrary, peaceful coexistence promotes the class struggle in the capitalist countries. This is attested to by the mounting struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie now observed in a number of capitalist countries (Japan, Italy, France, etc.) and the growth of the international communist movement. Suffice it to say that after the Moscow Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1957, twelve new Marxist parties were born. The number of Communists in the world increased by 7 million and in 1960 reached the huge figure of about 40 million.

Peaceful coexistence creates particularly favourable opportunities for the national-liberation movement. This is demonstrated by the fact that in fifteen post-war years about 1,500 million people, i.e., half of mankind, broke the chains of colonialism.

Peaceful coexistence of the two opposing systems also implies an irreconcilable ideological struggle, a battle between the socialist and bourgeois ideologies. Socialist ideology expresses the interests of the working class, of all working people and proves the historical necessity of the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie, for socialism and communism. It is pitted against bourgeois ideology which expresses the interests of the imperialist reactionary forces, attempts to justify the existence of imperialism and is brandished as a weapon in the fight against peace, democracy and socialism. All means of ideological influence are exploited for these purposes. The chief of them is *anti-communism*, which mainly consists of slander on socialism and a falsified interpretation of the policies and aims of the communist parties and of Marxism-Leninism. Consistent and implacable struggle against bourgeois ideology is an indispensable condition for the victory of socialism in the peaceful competition with capitalism.

## 4. Transition from Capitalism to Socialism — the Main Feature of Our Epoch

### *Conversion of the World Socialist System into the Decisive Factor in World Development*

History has more than once witnessed the conflict of different social systems, with the struggle ultimately ending in the victory of the more progressive system. There can be no doubt that the present struggle of two opposing systems—socialism and capitalism—will end in the complete victory of the socialist system.

The world of socialism is expanding and the world of capitalism is shrinking. *Socialism will inevitably supersede capitalism everywhere.* "Our epoch, whose main content is the transition from capitalism to socialism, is an epoch of struggle between the two opposing social systems, an epoch of socialist and national-liberation revolutions, of the break-down of imperialism and the abolition of the colonial system, an epoch of the transition of more and more peoples to the socialist path, of the triumph of socialism and com-

munism on a world-wide scale. The central factor of the present epoch is the international working class and its main creation, the world socialist system." (Programme of the C.P.S.U.)

The days of capitalism's undivided rule are gone forever. Today the main content, the main trends and main distinctive features in mankind's development are determined by the world socialist system, the forces fighting against imperialism, for socialism and social progress. The exertions of the imperialists to stem the onward movement of history are futile. Firm prerequisites have been created for the continued decisive victories of socialism.

The socialist system is exerting its main impact on world development through its economic progress. Its high economic growth rates give the socialist system an ever-increasing share in world industrial and agricultural production. Before long the output of the world socialist system will exceed the total production of the capitalist countries. This will spell defeat for capitalism in the most decisive sphere of human endeavour, material production.

As the socialist system advances and its economic and political might grows, its role in solving major international problems, above all problems of war and peace, increases. The forces of socialism and peace are now able not only to expose the reactionary intrigues of the imperialists but also to frustrate them.

The tremendous importance of the world socialist system in mankind's development today is also expressed in its greater influence on the people's struggle in the non-socialist states. By force of example the socialist system causes a revolution in the minds of the working people in the capitalist countries, inspires them to fight capitalism, to work for peace and national progress, for democracy and the victory of socialism. The people now organising a revolution can count on the support of the socialist system to prevent world reaction from attempting to crush the revolution, from exporting counter-revolution. The socialist countries can and do give every assistance and support to those building a new society.

The socialist countries are the most irreconcilable enemies of colonialism and steadfast champions of national equality

and sovereignty. It was the Soviet Union which in September 1960 submitted to the United Nations a Declaration proclaiming the historic demand to put an end for all time to colonialism, this most disgraceful blight on the history of mankind. The world socialist system opposes colonial domination, gives every support to the people's struggle for independence and is a powerful factor in the advance of the national-liberation movement and the disintegration of imperialism's colonial system.

The existence and development of the socialist system is creating ever more favourable *international conditions* for the development of the world revolutionary movement.

The *internal conditions* too are now more favourable for the transition to socialism by more countries; this is connected with the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism and the aggravation of all its intrinsic contradictions.

### *The Deepening of the General Crisis of Capitalism*

While the new world of socialism, full of strength, vigour and health, is growing and advancing, the capitalist system is in the throes of a deep-going process of decline and disintegration. It has entered a new, third stage of its general crisis embracing literally all aspects of life in bourgeois society: the economy, home and foreign policy and ideology.

During the *first stage* of the general crisis, ushered in by the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Soviet Union arose and became the first socialist country, thus putting an end to the undivided sway of capitalism in the world.

During the *second stage*, as a result of the victory of socialist revolutions in a number of European and Asian countries, socialism emerged beyond the bounds of one country and became a world system. Of particular importance in this stage was the victory of the revolution in China with its vast population.

The principal characteristic of the new, *third stage* in the general crisis of capitalism is that the correlation of forces in the world has radically changed in favour of socialism. More and more countries are falling away from capitalism and the forces fighting for socialism and social progress are rapidly growing throughout the world. The positions of

imperialism in the peaceful economic competition with socialism are being inexorably weakened. The unprecedented advance of the national-liberation movement has led to the break-down of imperialism's colonial system. What is important is that this new stage in capitalism's general crisis did not arise in connection with a world war, but in conditions of peace and peaceful coexistence of the opposing social systems.

Greater internal instability and decay of the capitalist economy is a salient feature of the new stage in the general crisis of capitalism. Low economic growth rates, chronic under-employment of productive capacity and economic crises which periodically rack the capitalist world vividly reveal the growing inability of capitalism to make full use of the available productive forces.

With the development of state-monopoly capitalism and the growth of militarism, all the contradictions of imperialism are aggravated. The struggle between labour and capital mounts, the interests of the nation deeply clash with the selfish aspirations of the monopolist clique who control the state machine. In view of the uneven economic and political development of the capitalist countries the correlation of forces within the capitalist system is rapidly changing, the contradictions between individual capitalist countries and between their blocs are sharpened and competition in the capitalist market grows keener.

The deeper crisis in imperialism's home and foreign policies is a feature of the third stage of capitalism's general crisis, expressed in mounting political reaction along all lines, renunciation of bourgeois freedoms, the establishment of fascist, tyrannical regimes in a number of countries and the loss of imperialism's decisive role in international affairs.

Bourgeois ideology is also in the grip of a very deep crisis. Its principal features are pessimism and fear of the future, mysticism and disbelief in science, in man's creative forces and possibilities, rejection of progress and slander of communism, defence of the system of wage-slavery and oppression so hated by the people. Bourgeois ideology long ago lost the ability to produce ideas that could attract the people. It is the ideology of a class retreating from the historical scene, and therefore its complete bankruptcy is inevitable.

The conflict between the productive forces and relations of production in capitalist society has become extremely acute. The harnessing of atomic energy, the exploration of space, automation and other scientific and technical achievements have ushered in a great scientific and technical revolution. But capitalist relations of production are too narrow for this revolution. Capitalism not only prevents the development of the productive forces and hinders the application of the achievements of the human mind in the interests of social progress, but even turns them against mankind itself, converting them into monstrous means of war. This fundamental conflict in the capitalist mode of production confronts mankind with the task of breaking the narrow bounds of capitalist relations, unfettering the mighty productive forces created by man and using them for the good of all. The only way to do this is through the socialist revolution which will replace capitalist relations of production with new, socialist ones. "*The world capitalist system as a whole is ripe for the social revolution of the proletariat*," as the Programme of the C.P.S.U. declares.

### *The Struggle for Democracy as an Integral Part of the Struggle for Socialism*

The expansion and development of the socialist world will continue through the falling away of more and more countries from the capitalist system.

In the course of the revolution socialist changes are intertwined with democratic, anti-imperialist changes. Lenin, developing and explaining his theory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into the socialist revolution, maintained that in the epoch of imperialism there could be no "pure" revolutions unconnected with a democratic, anti-imperialist movement of the most diverse social groups. In these conditions the proletariat, the most consistent champion of the popular, anti-imperialist aspirations, must head the democratic movement, unite the different classes taking part in it and lead them to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism.

It is possible that the revolution in a number of countries may pass through two relatively independent stages: general

democratic and socialist. This is how the revolution developed in the Soviet Union, in China and some other People's Democracies. In the Soviet Union the February bourgeois-democratic revolution preceded the Great October Socialist Revolution. In a number of People's Democracies the revolution passed through an anti-imperialist, democratic phase before entering the socialist phase. The development of the revolution in some other countries where capitalism still holds sway may also proceed in this way.

Strong democratic movements developed after the Second World War, such as the national-liberation movement and the struggle for the preservation of national sovereignty, the movement for peace and national security and the struggle for democracy in a number of capitalist countries. The contemporary democratic movements are marked by their exceptionally vast scale and organisation. They are spearheaded against imperialism, against the reactionary home and foreign policies of the monopolies.

The monopolies ruthlessly exploit the workers, peasants and artisans, ruin the petty and middle bourgeoisie, stifle the creative potentialities of the intellectuals, suppress the progressive forces, abolish the remnants of democratic freedoms and prepare for a new world war. That is why all the above-mentioned classes and groups in bourgeois society are vitally interested in abolishing the rule of the monopolies. As a result, favourable conditions are created for uniting all these forces in a common struggle for peace, national independence and democracy, the nationalisation of the key branches of the economy, the peaceful use of the economy and radical land reforms, for an improvement in the living conditions of the working people and defence of their rights.

The struggle against the monopolies, for peace and democratic reforms is naturally not of a socialist character, it does not aim to abolish private property and the exploitation of man by man. But this struggle undermines the rule of the monopolies and facilitates the attainment of national independence and democracy, which creates the necessary conditions for undertaking the tasks of the socialist revolution.

The alliance of the working class with all the other working people, and above all with its main ally, the peasants,

is being forged in the crucible of the struggle against the capitalist monopolies, for democracy and peace. Uniting around the working class and its Marxist party, the working people—the peasants, many white collar workers and a large number of intellectuals—are schooled in the struggle against reaction. In the course of it they become increasingly convinced that under capitalism they cannot get rid of monopoly oppression and they come to the conclusion that the abolition of capitalism is the only way out for them. This is how Right-wing socialist, reformist illusions are gradually dispelled and how the political army of the socialist revolution is created.

It is clear from all this that today the mainstays of capitalism are destroyed not only in the course of the direct social revolution of the proletariat. Socialist revolutions, national-liberation, anti-imperialist revolutions, national democratic revolutions, broad peasant movements, the people's struggle for the overthrow of fascist and other tyrannical regimes and the general democratic movement against national oppression—all merge into one world revolutionary process which undermines and destroys capitalism.

### *Forms of Transition of Different Countries to Socialism*

The question of the *concrete forms* of transition to socialism by various countries acquires great importance in our age, the age of the irrepressible movement of mankind to socialism. What are these forms? What do they depend upon? Is the transition to socialism necessarily connected with an armed uprising, with civil war, as, for example, was the case in Russia?

Creative Marxism proceeds from the premise that the forms of transition from capitalism to socialism depend above all on the correlation of the class forces in a country. If the forces of the working class and its allies are obviously far stronger than the forces of the capitalists and the latter, convinced of the hopelessness of resistance, prefer, as Lenin put it, to preserve their heads and to yield power to the proletariat, a peaceful transition from capitalism to

socialism is possible. If, however, the bourgeoisie does not make this "concession" and offers armed resistance, the working class will have to crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie by force.

The working class never rattles the sabre without reason, but it must always be prepared to repulse an armed attack by the bourgeoisie and to defend its rights.

After the February Revolution in 1917 the Bolsheviks then raised the question of a peaceful development of the revolution. This did not happen, but this was not the fault of the proletariat. At that time the bourgeoisie held undivided sway throughout the world, it felt strong and, therefore, the chances of a peaceful transition to socialism were very small.

Now the situation is different. The new correlation of forces between capitalism and socialism which arose in the world after the last war greatly extended the possibilities of a peaceful transition to socialism. In the capitalist countries themselves these possibilities are rapidly expanding owing to the growth of the forces of democracy and socialism and the greater influence of the working class and its Marxist party among the people.

In these conditions the working class of some countries, relying on the broad movement of the people against imperialism, has greater opportunities than ever to take power into its hands without bloodshed and civil war.

The parliamentary road can be one of the ways for the peaceful development of the socialist revolution. If the working class in a number of capitalist countries enjoys the support of the majority of the people and resolutely fights the opportunists, it will be able to win a stable majority in parliament, to turn parliament into an instrument serving the working people and, after breaking down the resistance of the reactionary forces, it will be able to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful socialist revolution.

The parliamentary way is a possible way for the transition to socialism and is by no means a reformist way. It is the road of irreconcilable class struggle, *radical revolutionary changes* leading to the building of a new, socialist society.

The possibility of a peaceful development of the socialist revolution does not mean that the proletariat renounces non-peaceful forms. The bourgeoisie still dominates a large part of the world, it has arms which it can and does use against the working class and all working people. That is why the working class must be on its guard, must be always prepared to employ the most diverse forms of struggle—peaceful and non-peaceful, parliamentary and non-parliamentary. Mastery of all forms of struggle, competent use of those which best suit the concrete situation, the ability to quickly and suddenly replace one form by another are an indispensable condition for the victory of the socialist revolution in all countries.

CHAPTER XIX

# SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY

The material, economic relations of people constitute the basis of social development. But to understand this development, knowledge of the economic factors alone is far from sufficient. Besides productive activity, people and society have a spiritual life. People are guided by definite political and moral ideas, have scientific theories, views on art and so on. All these ideas and views are of a social character as regards their origin and importance, and belong to the sphere of *social consciousness.*

Social consciousness is of great significance in historical development. To gain a more complete idea of society we have to ascertain what social consciousness is, how it originated and what role it plays in society's life.

## 1. Social Consciousness as a Reflection of Social Being. The Essence and Origin of Social Consciousness

*Social consciousness is the sum-total of people's ideas, theories and views reflecting their social being.* Social being is multifarious and complex as also is social consciousness. Political and legal ideas, morality, art, science, philosophy and religion are various forms of social consciousness. These forms have their own distinct origin and development, they reflect various aspects of social being. The functions they perform are also diverse.

Idealism is unable to correctly explain the role of ideas, of social consciousness in the life of society. Idealists hold that it is ideas that determine the entire course of social development, but this in no way corresponds to reality.

Only historical materialism, by properly solving the basic question of philosophy as applied to society, has shown that the *social consciousness of people is a product of their social being*. It is in social being, the material productive activity of people, that we should look for the source of their ideas, theories and views.

The history of society shows that as people's social being changes so does their consciousness; old ideas disappear and new ones arise, conforming to the new conditions, the new social requirements. With the victory of socialism, for example, people's social being changed radically: socialist property succeeded capitalist private property. People's ideas and views changed accordingly. Instead of the principle of individualism which is the keystone of capitalist morality, the principle of collectivism, the foundation of communist morality, took root.

Similarly, if we analyse any other form of social consciousness we shall find that its ultimate source is the material life of society.

### *The Class Character of Ideology*

In a class society social consciousness, whatever form it assumes, inevitably takes on a *class character*. The sum-total of political, legal, moral, artistic and other views and ideas of a definite class comprise its *ideology*.

What is the explanation for the class character of ideology? Why does every class create its own ideology? In antagonistic society the position of classes is far from equal and they are faced with different social aims and tasks. It is through a definite system of views that a class expresses and justifies its position in society, defends its interests, strives to achieve its aims and carry out the tasks before it. Bourgeois ideology, for example, seeks to prove the eternity of private capitalist property and exploitation. The proletariat, on the other hand, is destined to abolish capitalism, to build socialism and communism, a society without classes

and exploitation. For these purposes it needs a qualitatively new, socialist ideology.

A society divided into hostile classes cannot have a single ideology. Both the ideology of the exploiting and exploited classes exists there, but it is the ideology of the class which dominates economically and politically that holds sway. Keen ideological struggle as a form of the class struggle has always been a feature of an antagonistic class society.

Since ideology always bears a class character, can it give the truth? Does it not distort reality to suit class interests? The revisionists claim that ideology and truth are incompatible, that ideology sacrifices the truth to the interests of one class or another. Marxism, however, demands that ideology be viewed from a concrete, historical angle in order to establish the interests of *what* class, progressive or reactionary, it expresses. So long as a class plays a progressive role in social development, so long as the interests of this class coincide with the development of objective reality, its ideology contains truth. But as soon as a class exhausts its progressive role and its interests come into conflict with the real course of development, its ideology ceases to be true and it begins to distort reality in order to suit class interests.

Let us take bourgeois ideology as an example. So long as the bourgeoisie fought against feudalism, its ideology reflected the world in a relatively true way. But no sooner had the bourgeoisie come to power, no sooner had it exhausted its progressive potentialities and become a brake on social development than bourgeois ideology lost the ability to reflect reality truthfully. "In place of disinterested inquirers," Marx wrote, "there were hired prize-fighters; in place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic."*

Marxist-Leninist ideology is scientific and true to the end, because the class interests of the working class and the objective course of history always coincide and therefore the ability of the Marxist-Leninist ideology to reflect truth is preserved at all stages of its development.

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* Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, 1959, p. 15.

### *Relative Independence of the Development of Consciousness*

We have ascertained that people's social being, their material, productive activity, determines their social consciousness. But consciousness also possesses *relative independence* in its development. How is it manifested?

Relative independence in the development of social consciousness consists in that it may lag behind the development of social being or run ahead of it; it is also manifested in the continuity of development. Relative independence of consciousness is also expressed in that it is not passive in relation to being, but actively influences it.

Social consciousness *lags behind* social being because people's social being is the first to change and then is followed by a change in their consciousness. This delay is also conditioned by the great viability of old ideas and views. This viability is not accidental: the ruling classes employ every means at their disposal to thoroughly spread their ideology among all members of society. All mass media (press, cinema, radio, TV, etc.) are utilised, for example, by the contemporary imperialist bourgeoisie to poison the minds of the working people and to disarm them ideologically. That is why, after the victory of the new system, survivals of the old ideology persist for a long time in the minds of some people.

The social consciousness of people, however, not only may lag behind the development of social being, but under certain conditions can *outstrip* this development. By analysing the laws of society, revealing general tendencies of historical development, outstanding men can foresee the future, i.e., create theories which run far ahead of their time and indicate the road of development for many decades ahead. The Marxist theory of scientific communism is a splendid model of foreseeing social events.

*Continuity* in the development of ideology is an important manifestation of the relative independence of social consciousness. Creating its own ideology, the new class does not renounce past achievements of human thought but assimilates them, places them at its service.

Continuity in the development of ideas is of great importance in social life. If people were unable to use the achievements of the culture of the past, they would literally have to begin everything from scratch: to discover laws which had been discovered long ago, to explore ways of devising the machines they need, ways that had been found long ago, and so on. Thanks to continuity in the development of ideas, this does not happen. Having at their disposal the titanic work accomplished by preceding generations, people are able to continue the work of their predecessors, to develop and improve their achievements and raise them to a new, higher level.

Different classes approach the old ideological heritage in a different way. Reactionary classes take from the past reactionary ideas and adapt them to the new historical conditions, to their own interests. The ideologists of imperialism, for example, utilise medieval scholasticism and mysticism, various idealist and religious systems in order to enslave the working people spiritually.

Advanced, revolutionary classes take from the ideological heritage that which has not lost its positive significance and can promote mankind's progress.

## 2. The Active Role of Ideas in Social Development

Historical materialism, proclaiming the primacy of social being in relation to social consciousness, the ideas and views of people, at the same time also admits the *active role* of ideas in the development of society. In any sphere of society's life people always act consciously and purposively and therefore their ideas, views and theories infuse all aspects of life and greatly influence them. The activity of social ideas is displayed in that they serve people as a guide to action, unite them and concentrate their efforts on the accomplishment of certain tasks.

Ideas can play a dual role by either *promoting* the development of society or *retarding* it. The role ideas play depends on the class that advocates them, whether it is progressive or reactionary, on how correctly they reflect the requirements of society's material life and on the extent to which the ideas meet the interests of the people.

Only ideas which express the interests of the advanced classes of society, the people, which correspond to the requirements of developing material production and help to abolish the old and establish the new social system, can have progressive importance in society's development.

However new and progressive ideas might be, they are unable, by themselves, to abolish the old social system and create a new one. For these ideas to become a material force, they must grip the minds of the people. Only the people which have assimilated progressive ideas create the social force capable of solving urgent social problems.

Of all ideas known to mankind, *scientific communism* is the most progressive. Its vital force lies in that it is founded on the objective laws governing social development and meets the vital requirements of society's material life and the interests of the millions of the working people. That is why the idea of scientific communism is a material force which is transforming the world. This idea inspired the Russian working class who, in alliance with the poor peasants, under the leadership of the Communist Party, carried out the October Socialist Revolution. It served the Soviet people in their heroic struggle for socialism and is now illuminating their path to the communist morrow. This idea is winning the minds of more and more ordinary people the world over. It is helping the working people in the capitalist countries to fight the reactionary imperialist forces and, where capitalism has been abolished, to build socialism.

Backward ideas, which distort reality and serve the interests of reactionary classes, retard the development of society. The ideas of the contemporary, reactionary bourgeoisie are such ideas.

It follows from all this that social ideas are very important in the life of mankind. In practical activity, therefore, it is important to act not only on the principle of the determining role of social being but also to take into account the active role of ideas in society's development.

### 3. Political and Legal Ideas

#### *Politics and Economics*

*Politics, political relations* are above all relations between classes, the struggle of classes for power, for domination in society. Relations between states and nations also come within the sphere of politics. Politics arose together with the emergence of classes, the class struggle and the state. Politics make up the *main trend* in the activities of a state.

Politics as the relations between classes are brought into being by the economic structure of society, its basis. Lenin, disclosing the origin of politics and its inseverable connection with the economic structure of society, called politics the concentrated expression of economics, its epitome and consummation. It is in politics that the economic interests of classes find their fullest and all-round expression.

But politics, engendered by economics, itself makes a great impact on the economy, on the entire course of social development. The development of the economy prepares the ground for transforming the social system. This transformation as such, however, is a result of the conscious activity of the people which is directed by politics. Taking into account the very great role of politics in the life and development of society, Lenin held that politics cannot but have primacy over economics. This means that the solution of economic, production tasks should be approached from the political, class viewpoint. "Without the proper political approach to the matter," Lenin wrote, "the given class will not retain its rule and *consequently* will not be able to accomplish *its task in production* either."*

It is the political, class approach that distinguishes the activity of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and all the fraternal Communist and Workers' parties. In solving any economic and organisational questions, the Communist Party has always proceeded from the interests of the working class, of all working people. The fundamental interests of the working class, of all the Soviet people dictat-

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* Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 32, pp. 62-63.

ed, for example, such cardinal measures of reorganisation of the national economy along socialist lines as the industrialisation of the country and the collectivisation of agriculture.

### *Political Ideas and Their Significance*

People's *political ideas* and *views* are closely connected with politics. While politics expresses the relations of classes, nations and states, political ideas *reflect* and *substantiate* these relations. Political ideas include the views of a class on the class struggle and the revolution, the social and state system, on relations between states and questions of war and peace. These views are applied in the direct struggle of classes, the activities of states, parties and other political institutions and organisations.

Political ideas find their expression in state constitutions, programmes and declarations of parties and other political organisations, in special theoretical studies and other documents.

The nature of political ideas in an antagonistic class society depends on the interests of the class they express. An exploiting class tries with the help of political ideas to justify its dominant position, to reinforce its economic basis, and this determines the nature of its ideas. An exploited class in its political ideas proves the need for abolishing the exploiting system and creating a new society, a society without exploitation. The political ideology of the exploited is the ideology of revolutionary struggle, of abolishing the old and creating the new.

Two opposing political ideologies—of the working class and the bourgeoisie—are now at grips in the world. The political ideology of the working class is the ideology of proletarian internationalism, friendship of the working people of all countries, unity and co-operation of all the progressive forces in the common struggle for peace, democracy and socialism. It is expressed most fully and from every angle in the Marxist-Leninist theory, in the Communist parties' programmes and the socialist countries' constitutions. This ideology proves the need for the class struggle of the working class and all the working people against the bourgeoisie,

for the victory of socialism and communism. It serves the working class and its party as a guide in the political struggle, the highest form of the proletariat's class struggle.

The policy and the political ideas of the working class are truly scientific. They are founded on knowledge of the laws of social development and fully correspond to the interests of the people. The experience of history and the great successes of the world communist movement demonstrate the strength and vitality of these ideas.

Pitted against the political ideas of the working class are the political ideas of the imperialist bourgeoisie, whose aim is to sanctify and perpetuate capitalist wage-slavery. These ideas seek to justify the policy of suppression of the working class and the democratic forces within the country, the policy of national oppression and preparation for a new world war.

The political ideas of the contemporary bourgeoisie have no scientific basis. They run counter to the objective laws of social development and the interests of the people and are therefore doomed to failure. Just as the Nazi idea of world domination failed, so the ideology and policy of colonialism is collapsing before us, and so will all the other reactionary ideas of the contemporary imperialist bourgeoisie.

Of all the forms of social consciousness, politics and political ideas stand closest to the economic basis. Through the activities of the state, of parties and other political organisations politics and political ideas influence the basis and the entire course of social development. They especially affect the development of all other forms of social consciousness—law, morality, art, religion, philosophy and science. They permeate all these forms of social consciousness, give them a class bias and turn them into the tool of a certain class.

### *Law and Legal Ideas*

Legal relations, regulated by human law, exist in society. *Law* is the sum of *obligatory* standards and rules of behaviour of people in society. These rules are expressed in corresponding laws which are safeguarded by the state and all its numerous instruments of compulsion and education.

Law, like politics, arose with classes and the state. It is the will of the ruling class expressed in legal forms and it defends the political and economic interests of the ruling class.

The history of antagonistic class society has known slave, feudal and capitalist law, each of which served the exploiters in their struggle against the exploited. Only socialist law expresses the interests of the working people and is the true law of the people.

People's legal relations should be differentiated from their legal ideas and views which describe the attitude of people to the law of the given society and also their concepts of what is lawful and unlawful, obligatory or non-obligatory as applied to people, states and nations.

Legal ideas and views bear a class character and express the interests of a definite class. In an antagonistic class society the legal ideas of the exploiting class prevail. In order to impose its will on the other classes the ruling class makes use not only of the state machine, but also of legal ideas. Through these ideas it tries to justify the law it has established, to conceal its class character and present it as the law of the people, as the supreme expression of justice and good.

Let us take capitalist society as an example. It has a system of law founded on the legal ideas of the bourgeoisie. The purpose of these ideas is to prove that society can have no more just law than bourgeois law and that it is an embodiment of democracy, that the bourgeois court is impartial, etc. In reality bourgeois law protects capitalist property and serves to justify exploitation and the suppression of all progressive forces.

With the appearance of the socialist state socialist law is born, the first law in the history of society which rules out class inequality of people.

Socialist law and the legal ideas underlying it, radically differ from the law and legal ideas of antagonistic class societies. They express the interests of the entire people, protect and help to consolidate the economic basis of socialism, socialist property, and educate Soviet people to observe the law and to conscientiously do their duty. The socialist system is incompatible with lawlessness and contempt for the interests of the individual and therefore the Soviet

state and the Communist Party constantly reinforce socialist law and order and do not brook any attempt to violate it.

Since the laws of socialist society fully correspond to the people's interests, the absolute majority of Soviet citizens comply with them consciously and voluntarily, and the Soviet state applies compulsory measures only against those who maliciously violate public order, embezzle social property or commit other crimes.

As society advances to communism the role of the state as a force compelling the citizens to observe the law will constantly diminish and its functions of preserving socialist law and order will be gradually transferred to social organisations. The task of social organisations will be not so much to find and punish the violators as to prevent violations and teach Soviet citizens to respect the laws and conscientiously uphold them.

In future, as a result of the improvement in the people's material and cultural standards, the rise in their social consciousness and organisation, all the conditions will be created for eliminating violations of the law and fully replacing disciplinary measures by measures of social influence and education. With the complete victory of communism there will be no need for law. Law will naturally merge with the duties and rules of the communist way of life.

## 4. Morality

### *The Essence of Morality and Its Place in Social Life*

*Morality* or *ethics* is the sum-total of standards or rules of behaviour in society, reflecting people's ideas of justice and injustice, good and evil, honour and dishonour, etc. In contrast to legal rules, the moral standards and rules are not recorded in law, but are maintained by force of public opinion, customs, habits and education, by force of man's conviction. They determine the relations of man to society, to other nations, to the family and other people.

Morality arose with the birth of human society. Society has always made definite demands on its members expressed

in moral standards. These standards are not eternal. They change with society's development under the influence of changes in production and above all in relations of production. In primitive society moral standards were equal for all members. With the appearance of classes they began to reflect the interests of one class or another. Morality acquired a class character. In a society divided into antagonistic classes there exist the morality of the exploiters and the morality of the exploited, the morality of the ruling class prevailing: under slavery, the morality of the slave-owners dominated; in feudal society, the morality of the feudal lords, and in bourgeois society, the morality of the capitalists. Opposite them stood the moral standards and principles of the slaves, peasants and proletarians.

As an element of the superstructure, morality influences all aspects of life in society. Through the attitude of the people to work and property, it influences the economy. Communist morality, for example, by declaring socialist property sacred and inviolable, stands guard over the economic foundation of socialism. Morality also has a direct bearing on politics; any political action of a state receives moral appraisal, approval or disapproval from the members of society. It is natural that the people's moral approval of a political action is an important factor making for its success. The success of the Soviet Union's peace policy is largely due to the moral support of the peoples of all countries, all progressive mankind.

At present, two moralities are pitted against each other in society: communist and bourgeois. What is their essence? What social aims do they serve? Bourgeois morality plays a reactionary part in society's development. Its main social aim is to preserve the keystone of capitalism, private property and exploitation. These aims, in effect, are also served by religious morality. By preaching non-resistance to evil and violence, religion diverts the working people in the capitalist countries from the struggle against the exploiters, lulls them with promises of a paradise awaiting man in the other world as a reward for his submission and patience.

Bourgeois morality is conditioned by the dominance of private capitalist property which disunites people, turns

them into enemies, competitors in the struggle for profit, the holy of holies of capitalism. In the quest for profit the capitalist tramples upon all standards of human morality; he is absolutely indifferent to the fate of the people around him, to the fate of his country and society as a whole. He places his selfish interests above everything else in the world. Extreme selfishness is the basic principle of bourgeois morality. "Man to man is a wolf", "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost"—these are the ethical rules proclaimed by the morality of bourgeois society. There could be no other rules in a society where private property holds sway, where money is the supreme moral measure, where everything—love and honour, the dignity and conscience of man—is bought and sold. "The spirit of individualism, self-interest, the thirst for profit, hostility and competition make up the essence of the ethics of bourgeois society," Khrushchov said. "The exploitation of man by man, on which bourgeois society rests. is the grossest violation of ethics."

### *The Moral Code of the Builder of Communism*

*Communist morality* expresses the interests of the absolute majority of society's members, the interests and ideals of all the working people. It includes general human moral standards which the people have accumulated in the course of the struggle against the exploiters and against moral vices. These morals, for example, include elementary demands on man's behaviour, such as bravery and honesty, respect for elders, abhorrence of greed, slander, envy, etc. The morality of the working class is of particularly great importance in the ethical development of society, in moulding the standards and requirements of communist morality.

Communist morality originated under capitalism where it expressed the protest of the proletariat against exploitation and inequality, the desire to introduce rules of humanism based on friendship, comradely co-operation and mutual assistance of people free from capitalist slavery. But in capitalist society the morality of the working class does not hold sway. It begins to prevail with the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of a socialist society.

Communist morality, Lenin pointed out, is subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle. *Its content and aim is to build and consolidate communism.* It is this idea that underlies *the moral code of the builder of communism*, formulated in the Programme of the C.P.S.U. From the point of view of communist morality, that which promotes the movement of society towards communism is moral. *Devotion to the cause of communism, love for the socialist motherland* which blazes for mankind the trail into the communist morrow, love for *all the socialist countries*, is the first, cardinal demand in the moral code of every Soviet citizen.

Labour is the source of society's wealth and the personal well-being of each member of socialist society, labour is the duty and matter of honour for each Soviet citizen. That is why *conscientious labour for the good of society, concern on the part of everyone for the preservation and growth of public wealth* are prime demands of communist morality. The overwhelming majority of Soviet citizens live up to these demands; for them the rule of socialism—he who does not work, neither shall he eat—became law long ago.

The principles of communist morality stem from the very nature of the socialist system, from its economic basis, social ownership of the means of production. It unites people, enables them to live and work according to the principles of fraternal friendship, mutual respect and co-operation. Hence such an important principle of communist morality as *collectivism and comradely mutual assistance* expressed in the slogan: one for all and all for one.

In socialist society concern for the social interests does not run counter to the interests of the individual. Everything good done by a Soviet citizen is done both for himself and for all people. Being conscientious in his job and doing his work well, he thereby shows his concern for his comrades who also work for the good of all. This strikingly reflects the combination of the social and personal interests in socialist society. The aim of socialist production is to satisfy man's requirements. The desire to be useful to society, to one's people primarily motivates the actions of the Soviet citizen.

The principle of collectivism underlies the approach to duty, conscience and honour. It is man's duty and honour

to be useful to society, to contribute to its advance and to be *intolerant of actions harmful to the public interest.* If a man does everything in his power for society, for the good of the people, his conscience is clear and he has a *high sense of civic duty.*

The development of proletarian internationalism, of socialist patriotism and humanism is an indispensable condition for implanting the principles of communist morality in the minds of the Soviet people. Socialist humanism is of a higher, qualitatively new type. It consists of genuinely *humane relations and mutual respect between people*: man is to man a friend, comrade and brother. Socialist humanism combines respect, love for man and concern for his material and spiritual welfare with an *uncompromising attitude to the enemies of communism, peace and the freedom of the nations.*

Soviet patriotism too is qualitatively new. It combines love for, and devotion to, one's country, to the entire socialist community with proletarian internationalism, *fraternal solidarity with the working people of all countries, and with all the nations* and respect for the people of all other states, big and small. Soviet patriotism is incompatible with nationalism, the ideology of national isolation and hostility between the peoples, national inequality and disunity of the working people. The moral code of communist society proclaims the *friendship and brotherhood among all people of the* Soviet *Union and intolerance of national and racial hatred.*

Communist morality demands that people observe the rules of the socialist way of life, calls for a courteous attitude towards older people and women, *mutual respect in the family and concern for the upbringing of children.* Love, equality and mutual assistance between husband and wife, friendship and mutual trust of parents and children comprise the ethical foundation of the family in socialist society.

The principles of communist morality also require definite traits in man's character: *honesty and truthfulness, moral purity, simplicity and modesty in social and private life, an uncompromising attitude to injustice, parasitism, dishonesty, money-grubbing and careerism.*

*Overcoming the Survivals of Capitalism as an Integral Part of Communist Education*

The success of socialist construction and the Party's tremendous educational work have made the principles of communist morality part and parcel of the Soviet people's life and work. But survivals of the past still persist in the minds of some people. There are still drones who have no desire to work and prefer to lead a parasitic life, money-grubbers, selfish individuals and bureaucrats who place their private interests above everything else. There are also embezzlers of socialist property and flaunters of labour discipline and public order.

In a country where socialism has triumphed there are neither economic nor political grounds for the rise of backward views and sentiments. How are we to explain the fact that they do exist?

First, socialism does not grow up on its own basis, but emerges from capitalism which carries its traditions and customs over into the new society. People's social consciousness does not change at once following changes in social being, but only after a certain time, as a result of which it may lag behind social being. It is therefore clear why the old traditions and habits weigh upon the people of the new society for quite a long time.

Secondly, the existence of backward views is in no small way due to the influence of the ideology of the bourgeoisie who does everything possible to affect the minds of Soviet people, to reanimate bourgeois customs and prejudices in order to retard the advance to communism.

Thirdly, the existence of survivals of capitalism is also due to certain subjective reasons, for example, insufficient control over the application of the socialist principle of distribution—to each according to his work—shortcomings in ideological work, in bringing up the younger generation, particularly in the family and the school. Violation of Soviet laws and the principles of communist morality is not always condemned by public opinion, and without this a successful struggle against survivals of the past is impossible.

Men deeply infected with capitalist survivals seriously hinder communist construction. They upset the normal

life and work of the Soviet people, encroach on the property of society and individual citizens, cause discord in family life and so on.

Survivals of the past are extremely tenacious, they do not wither away of themselves and persist for a long time in the life and minds of millions of people long after the economic conditions which brought them into being have vanished. That is why struggle against the survivals of the past is an *important part of communist education.*

*Constructive labour, active participation of all members of society in building communism* is the only way to uproot the survivals of the past and educate the new man. Every form of work for the good of society, both manual and mental, is respected in the Soviet Union. Social labour is the duty of each Soviet citizen. The mind of man is gradually transformed and his lofty spiritual traits are moulded in the common, planned labour of all members of society, in their daily participation in administering state affairs. By working in a collective man reveals his abilities and talents to the full, advances culturally and technically, becomes imbued with the spirit of pioneering and love for the new and learns to place the interests of society above everything else. That is why the fostering of a communist attitude to work in all members of society is a major means for bringing up the people in the spirit of the lofty principles of communist morality. The Party aims to instil in the mind of each member of society the profound conviction that man cannot live without constructive labour, without contributing to the good of society. "To prepare the individual for labour, to instil in his mind love and respect for labour as life's prime want, is the essence, the core of all work in communist education," as is pointed out in the resolution of the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Persistent study, constant advance in general education and culture help eliminate survivals of the past in people's minds. The more cultured and educated a person is, the more efficiently he works, the more actively he takes part in social affairs, the more modest and unassuming he is in personal and social life. Persistent work and constant study foster an uncompromising attitude to injustice and parasitism, dishonesty and careerism.

The movement for communist labour offers splendid examples of educating people as they work and study. The moral principles inspiring the participants in this movement are work for the good of the country, a sense of civic duty, persistence in championing the new in their work and way of life, purposiveness and a sense of collectivism. This movement teaches Soviet people, especially the youth, to live and work in the communist way, and this is what makes it so important.

Each step towards communism extends the sphere of operation of morality and enhances the role of the principles of communist morality in the life and development of Soviet society. On the other hand, the sphere of administrative regulation of relations between people shrinks correspondingly. Proceeding from this, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government give every support and encouragement to all forms of the people's activities which promote the birth and development of the basic rules of the communist way of life.

## 5. Religion

### *The Essence of Religion and Its Reactionary Role*

*Religion is a distorted, fantastic* reflection of reality. "...All religion, however, is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces,"* Engels wrote.

The ideologists of the exploiting classes have attempted to prove that religious feelings are inherent in man by nature. In reality, however, religion arose only at a definite stage in society's development. The origin of religion can be traced to ignorance of the true causes of natural and social phenomena, to the awe-inspiring power of nature's spontaneous forces and social oppression.

The crux of religion is belief in the supernatural. Being dependent on nature's forces, men endowed them with supernatural properties, made them into gods and spirits,

* Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, 1959, p. 435.

devils and angels, etc. They naïvely believed that if these supernatural beings were not pacified they could inflict harm and suffering on them, while if they were placated and worshipped they would help the people. This is how religious worship arose, a combination of prayers, sacrifices and other rites. Religious worship brought into being priests, sorcerers, pastors and other religious servants and also various religious organisations and institutions.

The appearance of classes and exploitation subjected man to the pressure of spontaneous social forces in face of which he was as helpless as the savage was in face of elementary natural forces. The helplessness of the exploited in the struggle against the exploiters gave rise to a belief in a better life in the world to come as inevitably as the impotence of the savage in fighting nature engendered belief in gods, devils, miracles, etc. The working people sought in religion salvation from the suffering and privation inflicted on them by exploiting society.

Religion is reactionary. It is an instrument of spiritual oppression, ideological enslavement of the working people, a means of strengthening the rule of the exploiters. "Religion is the opium of the people—this dictum of Marx's is the cornerstone of the whole Marxist outlook on religion,"* Lenin wrote. Being an element of the superstructure, religion in an antagonistic class society seeks to reinforce the economic basis on which it rests, to strengthen the exploiting system. It preaches unqualified subordination to the exploiters, submission to fate, non-resistance to evil and thereby paralyses the people's revolutionary energy, dooms them to passivity, to patient waiting for everything to be done by god's will. By stories about the kingdom of heaven, the happy life in the other world, religion diverts the working people from the most burning issue of reality, from the revolutionary struggle against exploitation and for a just, genuinely humane social system.

Religion now serves imperialism in its struggle against the working class, against the forces of socialism and progress. "Marxism has always regarded all modern religions

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* Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, "Attitude of the Workers' Party Towards Religion", p. 285.

and churches and all religious organisations as instruments of bourgeois reaction that serve to defend exploitation and to drug the working class,"* Lenin wrote.

The reactionary role of religion is also manifested in its deep hostility to science, to a scientific world outlook. For many centuries the church ruthlessly suppressed science and persecuted scientists. It prohibited the spreading of progressive ideas, destroyed books propagating these ideas, and confined their authors to dungeons or burned them at the stake. Many progressive people perished in the flames of the Inquisition, including such notable scientists as Giordano Bruno and Lucilio Vanini.

Despite all its exertions the church was unable to stem scientific progress dictated by the requirements of material production. In our days, as it is unable to refute the greatest scientific achievements, the church tries to reconcile science with religion, to prove that scientific achievements do not run counter to faith, but are in line with it.

Such attempts are absolutely futile. Science and religion are irreconcilable. Science gives man true knowledge of the world and the laws of its development. It helps him master natural and social forces and to organise production. Religion, on the other hand, distorts the essence of the world, gives the wrong interpretation of it, stultifies the mind and will of man and deprives him of confidence in the triumph of science and progress.

### *Religious Survivals Under Socialism and Ways of Eliminating Them*

In the Soviet Union the church has been separated from the state and the school from the church. This means that the church has no right to interfere in state affairs and influence the content and organisation of education. On the other hand, the state does not interfere in the performance of religious rites.

The Communist Party has never regarded religion as the private affair of its members. We demand, Lenin wrote, that religion be a private affair with regard to the state, but

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* *Lenin, Marx-Engels-Marxism*, p. 285.

we can in no way consider religion a private affair with regard to our own party. The Communist Party constantly urges its members to combat every kind of spiritual oppression, including religion. Moreover, it ties up the struggle against religion with the general tasks of the proletariat's struggle for socialism and communism. It considers that the main requisite for eliminating religion is to abolish its class roots, namely, capitalist society with its exploitation and oppression of the people.

The victory of socialism and abolition of the exploiting classes in the U.S.S.R. destroyed the basis on which the church rested and tore up the social roots of religion. The spontaneous character of capitalism's development which instilled fear and uncertainty of the future in the hearts of the working people gave way to the planned administration of society on the basis of cognised laws. The cultural level of the Soviet people, their political consciousness and activity rose. As a result, the overwhelming majority of the Soviet people parted ways with religion and now firmly adhere to a scientific world outlook.

Nevertheless under socialism too there are people who are imbued with religious prejudices, because, as with the existence of other survivals of the past, social consciousness lags behind social being, the influence of bourgeois ideology remains and shortcomings in educational work occur. Religious survivals will gradually wither away with the aid of properly organised atheistic upbringing in the family and in the school, systematic scientific, atheistic propaganda and a constant rise in the cultural level of the people, their social consciousness and activity in building communism.

## 6. Science

### *The Essence of Science and Its Role in the Development of Society*

*Science* is the system of man's knowledge of nature, society and thought. It reflects the world in concepts, categories and laws, the correctness and truth of which are verified by practical experience.

Contemporary science as a whole consists of a sum of diverse sciences which study definite spheres of the material world. In this diversity of sciences we should differentiate the *social* sciences—history, political economy, philosophy, aesthetics and others—and the *natural* sciences—mechanics, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.

Science arose out of *practical activity* and develops on its basis. The requirements of material production are the main motive force of science. "If society has a technical need," Engels wrote, "that helps science forward more than ten universities."* As far back as primitive society man, while gaining his means of subsistence, came in contact with the forces of nature and gained from them the very first, superficial knowledge. This knowledge was of an empirical nature and did not yet bear the character of science. As a special form of social consciousness science arose later, in slave society, when mental labour separated from manual labour and a special group of people appeared, namely, scholars who engaged only in study.

*Continuity* of scientific knowledge is a primary distinction of science. Each new generation of people, each new society does not discard past scientific achievements, but accepts them and develops them further in line with the new practical requirements.

Science arises on the basis of production, practical activity and, in turn, serves the practical requirements of people, production, and is of great importance for society. It equips people with knowledge of objective laws, adds to their power over natural forces, indicates the way to a better life and eases their daily work. Science broadens man's horizon, rids him of superstitions and prejudices and helps mould a materialist world outlook.

Science not only develops in society under each mode of production, but is connected with society and is subject to its influence. The social sciences express the interests of a certain class, help consolidate or destroy the basis of society, although they are not directly connected with production. The natural sciences, on the other hand, are directly connected with production.

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* Marx, Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 504.

The development of science largely depends on the social system, on the economic relations prevailing in society. On them depends the direction and rates of scientific progress and also the application of scientific achievements. Capitalist relations of production were a powerful factor in scientific development during the period when capitalism was on the upgrade: the rapidly expanding capitalist production demanded more and more scientific knowledge. With the advent of imperialism the capitalist relations of production became a brake on scientific progress.

For the capitalist, science is a means of fighting competitors, an instrument for obtaining maximum profit. That is why he seeks to develop primarily the spheres of science that promise a big return. Since the war industry has become the most profitable branch of production, the monopolists take special pains to promote the sciences associated with armaments, the manufacture of atomic, chemical, germ and other means of warfare.

The contemporary imperialist bourgeoisie is interested in maintaining and spreading the idealist and religious world outlook and for this reason it tries to impose the methods of idealism and metaphysics and to subordinate knowledge to faith. It seeks by every possible means to divert natural science and scientists from their inevitable advance towards materialism and to steer them onto the false road of idealism and religion. When natural scientists accomplish important achievements in a particular field, the bourgeoisie makes use of philosophers and reactionary scientists to present these achievements in the wrong light and give them an idealist interpretation.

Bourgeois social science is directly devoted to a defence of the capitalist system, embellishment of the decayed façade of capitalism and furious attacks on communism and progress the world over.

In bourgeois society there are also not a few scientists who denounce imperialism and acclaim materialism, peace and social progress, but scientific policy is dictated by the ruling class, the monopoly bourgeoisie.

### *Soviet Science and Its Role in Building Communism*

Science in socialist society is an important means of developing production, raising the material and cultural standards of the people and educating them in the communist spirit. It enables society to make the most rational use of the wealth and forces of nature in the people's interests, to discover new kinds of energy and materials, to elaborate methods of influencing the climate and to explore outer space. Soviet science is a mighty instrument of peace, constructive endeavour and unprecedented social progress.

Soviet science is conspicuous for its kinship with the people. It not only serves the people, but the people have gained wide access to science. Tens of thousands of Soviet scientists come from among the people to whom they dedicate all their energy and knowledge. Together with scientists, millions of men and women trail-blazers in production, workers and collective farmers, are contributing to scientific progress.

Soviet science is inextricably bound up with production, with the life and work of the people. Scientific research is aimed at serving production and research is conducted directly in production, at numerous scientific institutions, design offices, laboratories and other establishments which function at plants and factories, in state farms and collective farms.

Socialism enables society to conduct research according to a general state plan and to co-ordinate the work of numerous scientific institutions, making possible the concentration of effort on the solution of problems of paramount importance. The dialectical-materialist world outlook prevailing in socialist society rids science of the stultifying influence of idealism and religion and equips research workers with scientific methods of studying natural and social phenomena.

The people's efforts and the concern of the Party and the Government have elevated Soviet science to great heights. Scientists have mastered ways of obtaining atomic energy, launched artificial Earth satellites, created the first space rockets and spaceships and ushered in a new era in science,

the era of space exploration. These achievements would have been impossible without the great progress of a whole range of sciences—physics, electronics, chemistry, radio-engineering, mathematics, and so on.

Soviet science is an important factor in building communism. The natural sciences play a decisive part in technical progress, in the development and improvement of technology and in raising the technical and cultural level of the people. Application of scientific achievements is becoming a decisive factor in accelerating the growth of socialist production. Science is becoming a direct productive force.

The social sciences are also very important. Equipping the Soviet people with knowledge of social laws, they lay the scientific foundation for directing society's development and play a great part in communist education and fostering a dialectical-materialist world outlook in people's minds.

## 7. Art

### *The Main Features of Art and Its Role in the Life of Society*

*Art* is a form of reflection of reality in artistic images in the mind of man. Reflecting the surrounding world, art helps people to understand it and serves as a powerful instrument of political, moral and artistic education.

The diversity of phenomena and events and also the different methods of reflecting them in works of art have given rise to diverse kinds of art: poetry and fiction, theatre, music, the cinema, architecture, painting, sculpture.

The cardinal feature of art is that, in contrast to science, it reflects reality not in concepts, but in a *concrete form perceivable by the senses*, in the form of typical artistic images. The artist creates an artistic image, reveals common, essential features of reality and conveys these features through individual, often inimitable characters, through concrete phenomena of nature and social life. The more vivid, the more tangible the individual traits of the artistic character, the greater its attraction and influence.

Art appeared at the dawn of human society, it arose in the process of labour. Initially art was directly inter-

twined with labour. To this day it has preserved this connection, though in a more mediated way. Truthful art has always been a real aid to people in their life and work. It has helped them fight the forces of nature, brought them enjoyment and inspired them to feats of labour and exploits in battle.

Aesthetic tastes and requirements, appreciation of beauty in life and in art have developed in the process of labour. One of the primary distinctions and tasks of art is to seek out the beautiful in life, to generalise it, typify it, mirror it in artistic images and bring to man, satisfying his aesthetic requirements and developing his aesthetic emotions.

In a class society art bears a class character, it is partisan. There is no "pure art", no "art for art's sake", nor can there be any. The accessibility, the great power of conviction and emotional influence of art make it an important weapon of the class struggle. That is why classes exploit art as a vehicle of their political, moral and other ideas.

Art is part of the superstructure and it serves the basis on which it develops. Contemporary bourgeois art, for example, serves the reactionary imperialist forces. It seeks to divert the working people from struggle against the exploiters, fosters in people immoral traits, contempt for other peoples and countries and for the forces of peace and progress. Bourgeois art is employed to glorify the capitalist order of things and slander the Communists and the communist movement. Defending the interests of obsolescent classes, this art departs from the truth of life and becomes formalistic and devoid of content. Among contemporary artists in capitalist countries there are also realists who reflect life truthfully and profoundly, but they are not in favour with the ruling imperialist circles.

Each class creates an art that corresponds to its class interests and aesthetic requirements. But among works of art there are many which have survived their class and age. These are works which vividly and truthfully reflect non-transient, general traits inherent in people of the most diverse eras and also works which make it possible to understand the essence of an era or a class. Among them are the finest sculptures of ancient Greek masters, paintings of the Renaissance, music of Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Tchai-

kovsky, the writings of Shakespeare, Goethe, Balzac, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Romain-Rolland, Maxim Gorky, and many other works of art which long ago became the possession of all mankind. From this follows another distinction of art, continuity of its development. The art of each new era preserves all that was progressive and good in the art of the preceding eras.

### *Socialist Art and Its Role in Building Communism*

A qualitatively new, socialist art has arisen on the basis of the revolutionary struggle of the working class and its advance to communism. Socialist art assimilates the best from progressive art of the past and constitutes a higher stage in the development of art corresponding to the new conditions.

*Socialist realism* is the creative method of this art. The main content of our age, the movement of society to communism must be reflected truthfully, in a historically concrete and highly artistic way. The art of socialist realism does not stand still but is constantly developed and enriched.

The basic principles of the art of socialist realism are *truthfulness* and *profundity* in the reflection of reality, *kinship with the people*, *partisanship* and *bold pioneering* in the artistic portrayal of life, combined with the use and development of all the *progressive traditions* of world culture. Socialist realism is conspicuous by its profound socialist content and multifarious, vivid national form. The method of socialist realism affords writers, painters and other artists vast scope to display their creative initiative, high mastery, to develop multifarious creative forms, styles and genres.

Truly realistic art has always been linked with the people but the organic ties of socialist art with the people, with their life and work are unprecedented. Pointing out the popular character of socialist art, Lenin once said: "Art belongs to the people. Its roots should be deeply implanted in the very thick of the labouring masses. It should be understood and loved by these masses. It must unite and elevate their feelings, thoughts and will. It must stir to activity and develop the art instincts within them."*

* Klara Zetkin, *My Recollections of Lenin*, pp. 19-20.

Kinship with the people, which is inherent in socialist art, is organically combined with its partisanship. Soviet art openly and directly serves the working class and all the working people. It has merged its destiny with the Communist Party, with the Marxist-Leninist world outlook.

Revisionists attack the Marxist-Leninist principle of partisanship in art, they oppose the guidance of art by the Communist Party, claiming that this fetters the creative freedom of the artist, suppresses his artistic personality, and so on and so forth. In reality, however, the principle of partisanship ensures the lofty ideas, content and high artistry of socialist art, orientates it to the solution of the most pressing social problems. It is an indispensable requisite for genuine freedom of artistic endeavour. "...Each one of us writes at the dictates of his heart, and our hearts belong to the Party and to our people, whom we serve with our art." This is how Mikhail Sholokhov has expressed the thoughts and sentiments of Soviet artists, their devotion to the people and the Communist Party.

The Communist Party expends great effort on developing socialist art, it promotes the creation of truthful works of lofty ideas, content and high artistry. It constantly promotes among the artists the spirit of devotion to the people, to the cause of communism and an irreconcilable attitude to shortcomings, lack of political awareness and lack of ideas and content in art.

The mission of Soviet art in the period of full-scale communist construction is to foster in people lofty political, moral and aesthetic traits; to help eradicate survivals of the past from their minds; to deeply and truthfully portray the people's heroic efforts; to reveal the rich spiritual world of our contemporary, his thoughts, feelings and aspirations; to flay implacably everything that hinders the forward movement of Soviet society; to inspire the Soviet people to fresh exploits in the construction of communism. Art plays a particularly great role in the *aesthetic* education of the people and is an important component of communist education. Art must develop appreciation of beauty, aesthetic emotions and awaken and develop people's artistic abilities and tastes.

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Having examined the fundamentals of Marxist philosophy, dialectical and historical materialism, we have gained an idea of the world as a whole, of nature, society and thought. We have seen that everything in the world changes, develops, inexorably moves forward from the lower to the higher, from the old to the new. We have learned that the new, communist system, is not a pipe-dream but a historical necessity and that the road to communism passes through the socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin once wrote that the teaching of Marx is all-powerful because it is true. The great truth of Marxism has now been confirmed by history. The complete and final victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, the rise and development of the world socialist system and the irrepressible movement of mankind towards their radiant communist future convincingly and irrefutably attest to the triumph of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

But the struggle is not over yet, capitalism still exists and holds sway in many countries. The reactionary ideology of the contemporary bourgeoisie stands guard over its interests. The aim of socialism is to defeat capitalism in peaceful economic competition and in the ideological struggle.

In the existing fierce struggle between bourgeois and socialist ideologies, the socialist ideology will triumph. The ideas of communism are increasingly winning the minds and hearts of all honest people in the world because they represent the truth of life and the truth is invincible. The days of the capitalist world are numbered. In place of obsolescent capitalism comes the new, the most just society man has known, communism. This is the law governing social development and the objective dialectics of history.

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В. АФАНАСЬЕВ
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